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Women, Work, and the Civil War: The Effect of the Civil War on the Women Working in Richmond, Virginia, between 1860 and 1870

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WOMEN, WORK, AND THE CIVIL WAR:

THE EFFECT OF THE CIVIL WAR ON THE WOMEN WORKING IN RICHMOND, VIRGINIA, BETWEEN 1860 AND 1870

A Thesis

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APPROVAL SHEET

This thesis is submitted in partial fulfillment of

the requirements for the degree of

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Elizabeth Ann Holmes

Approved, July 1989

M. Boyd Coyner

Cam Walker

James P. Whittenburg

Dedication

To my husband, without whose support and encouragement this thesis would never have been completed.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to acknowledge my gratitude to my advisor, Mr. Boyd Coyner, who, despite the fact that the author was on the opposite side of the state of Virginia, encouraged and guided this thesis to its conclusion. My appreciation also goes to the other members of my committee, Ms. Cam Walker and Mr. James Whittenburg, whose guidance also contributed greatly to this project.

Preface

The majority of the research for this thesis was conducted by studying the microfilmed census records for the city of Richmond for 1860 and 1870. Careful analysis of the data was required. There was a wealth of information to be gathered from the more than 7,000 women used for this study, but the accuracy of some of it was questionable. Originally, the category "Married within the Past Year" was considered for inclusion in the data. However, it quickly became evident that the information portrayed there for 1860 was inaccurate. Every female immigrant (and male, for that matter) had a check next to her name, even if she was an infant. Also, the age of some employed women seemed hard to believe. Girls as young as two or three were recorded as employed, usually as servants. This is a puzzling piece of data, since the form clearly stated that occupations were recorded for people over the age of ten.

Ten was also supposed to be the age of determination for literacy. Here, as in several other areas, organization was a challenge because the information given for 1860 was not exactly the same as that for 1870. The 1860 census made no distinction between ability to read and ability to write. And despite the age criteria, there were girls younger than 10 whose inability to read and write was recorded. The same is true for 1870, except in this year there were separate columns for reading and writing. Also, since the compilers of the data from the censuses of 1860 and 1870 and the census takers themselves were not consistent in the way in which data were collected and portrayed, great care was taken in analyzing and comparing such factors as: number of women employed, race, age and ethnicity of women employed, and types of occupations.

The fact that the 1860 census does not list occupations for slaves, however, was the most difficult problem to overcome. Consequently, one faces the problem of comparing a free work force in 1860 to one in 1870 which contained a large number of ex-slaves. In

order to interpret the data accurately, one must consider the types of jobs perfomed by slaves in 1860 when analyzing the jobs performed by black females in 1870.

All of the data, unless otherwise noted, were obtained from reading the census records of Richmond. The information used for background in this first part of the study came from secondary sources. Also, two theses produced for the History Department of The College of William and Mary were consulted prior to the start of this study: Rebecca Mitchell's Master's thesis entitled "Extending Their Usefulness: Women in Mid-Nineteenth Century Richmond" and Linda Singleton's undergraduate Honor's thesis, "Richmond Women and the Southern Lady Ideal, 1850-1870." The former work focused on the occupations of Richmond women in 1860, while the latter compared the working women of 1850 to those of 1860. By using the census records for both 1860 and 1870, which these previous studies did not, this thesis will provide a comprehensive comparison of the free working women of 1860 to those of 1870, including an examination of racial and ethnic differences, shifts in economic status, and changes in literacy rates.

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to compare quantitatively the occupations of free women in 1860 to those of women in 1870 for Richmond, Virginia, and to determine if the Civil War affected the occupations of women in this city.

My research concentrated primarily on the census records for these two years, supplemented with information on Richmond's social, economic, and political history at the time. In addition, sources on urban slavery and women's history were consulted.

Jobs held by women in these two years were organized into categories such as Skilled or Unskilled Labor, and broken down by race and ethnicity, in order to observe trends in the types of employment held by members of different races and groups. Other factors studied include economic status, age, literacy, and distribution of working women across political divisions.

The thesis suggests that no major changes in the employment of women occurred between 1860 and 1870 in terms of the types of jobs women performed. However, there was some shifting among races and ethnic groups, as well as economic changes.

The results suggest there was little change in the types of jobs performed by black women between 1860 and 1870; since they were slaves before the war, most black women were engaged in domestic work in 1860, and the same was true after the war. There was, however, a significant change in the number of foreign-born women working in Richmond after the war. This number decreased dramatically after the war. It also appears that there was a substantial decline in the number of women listing occupations between 1860 and 1870. Despite the decline in the literacy rate, as a result of the influx of former slaves into the workforce, the average worth for working women increased significantly, especially among black women.

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Introduction

The first of seven challenges of women's history outlined by Gerda Lerner is, simply the recognition "that women have a history."[1] For Richmond, as for most other places, historians have heretofore concentrated on documenting the lives of middle and upper class women. Since many of these women left diaries detailing thier lives and the activities of the city, piecing together a history for them is relatively straightforward. However, there is much less information available on the lives of lower class women. Yet, these women, who composed the majority of the female population in Richmond and who were not privileged or in the public eye, can provide us with a great deal of important information.

Critical to any study of the history of women is consideration of their social, political, and economic status at any particular time.[2] During the colonial period in America necessity dictated that women contribute significantly, albeit subordinately, to the support of themselves and their families. By 1840, there had been a shift in society and it was then deemed inappropriate for upper and middle class women to work outside the home, except in the fields of teaching and nursing.[3] However, this "cult of True Womanhood,"[4] which elevated domesticity to a cardinal virtue, did not apply to lower class women. They often worked out of necessity.

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[1]Gerda Lerner, "The Challenge of Women's History," The Majority Finds Its Past: Placing Women in History (New York: Oxford University Press, 1979), 169-180.

[2]Lerner, "New Approaches to Women's History," The Majority Finds Its Past, 10.

[3]Lerner, "The Lady and The Mill Girl," The Majority Finds Its Past, 16-18.

[4]Barbara Welter, "The Cult of True Womanhood," Dimity Convictions: The American Woman in the Nineteenth Century (Athens: Ohio University Press, 1976), 21-41.

Income from the father was the primary source of economic support for most middle and upper class families in the middle of the nineteenth century. However, with the advent of industrialization, more and more young single women entered the workforce. They worked for the same reason men did: self-support and support of dependents,[5] usually providing money for the support of parents, brothers, and sisters. The attitude of the female employee in the mid-nineteenth century was different, however, from that of her male counterpart. "Generally, women regarded their work as temporary and hesitated to invest in apprenticeship training, because they expected to marry and raise families. Thus they remained untrained, casual labor and were soon, by custom, relegated to the lowest paid, least skilled jobs."[6] Black women, however, were never able to think of their work as "temporary."

Black women, since the time of slavery, have been forced to work to support themselves and their families. To a far greater degree than their white counterparts, they have not experienced the circumstance of a spouse providing the sole, or at least primary, income. Discrimination against black men "and the low and insecure wages they could earn forced the majority of black married women, even mothers of small children, to work for pay outside the home."[7]

The jobs performed by black women in the nineteenth century were, for the most part, services for the white community. It must be remembered, however, that any analysis of the occupations of black females in the ninteenth century is not complete without considering the work of slave women. Black women did share a similar status with one segment of the white female population--the immigrants. Immigrant women were forced into many of the same occupations as were black women. As this study will

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[5]Lerner, "The Majority Finds Its Past," The Majority Finds Its Past, 164.

[6]Lerner, "The Lady and The Mill Girl," The Majority Finds Its Past, 25.

[7]Lerner, "Black Women in the United States," The Majority Finds Its Past, 74.

suggest, however, after the Civil War immigrant women were often better off than their native-born counterparts, whether black or white .

The years between 1820 and 1860 produced significant change in the occupations of women. During these years for example, "professionalization of teaching occurred . . .," resulting in "a sharp increase in the number of women teachers."[8] Of course, industrialization also played a part in these occupational changes. Jobs previously centered in the home, such as carding, spinning and weaving, were now increasingly located in factories. Poorer women subsequently became industrial workers, while middle and upper class women became "ladies."[9]

This newly acquired status, however, did not always mean satisfaction on the part of the woman. Denied higher education, restricted to domestic activities, and totally removed from public life, "the housewife changed from being primarily a producer of goods to being a shopper and maintainer of goods. With this came loss of skills and work satisfaction."[10] The effect of such societal restrictions on women was significant, especially as documented for southern women.

Southern white women strove to live up to the roles of perfection and submissiveness demanded by man and God. "Many women assumed that if they were unhappy or discontented in the 'sphere to which God had appointed them' it must be their own fault and that by renewed effort they could be better." Everywhere the message was the same: be a lady or your life will be ruined.[11] Women could not possibly live up to such expectations.

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[8]Lerner, "The Lady and The Mill Girl," The Majority Finds Its Past, 23.

[9]Ibid., 25.

[10]Lerner, "Black Women in the United States," 70; "Just a Housewife," The Majority Finds Its Past, 131.

[11]Anne F. Scott, The Southern Lady-From Pedestal to Politics, 1830-1930 (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1970), 8, 11-12, 20-21.

It will become obvious from the information compiled here that few did, at least in Richmond. Here it will be seen that many women worked outside the home, regardless of color. Their jobs cover all levels of skilled, service/unskilled, and trade occupations. A complete listing of the occupations by category can be found in Appendix A.

Obviously, there will be far more black women on the population schedules of free persons for the census rolls in 1870 as a result of Emancipation; therefore, a direct comparison between the non-white women of 1860 and 1870 is not possible. But were white working women employed in significantly different occupations in 1860 than they were in 1870? And what, if anything can be said about non-white women in these years? Answering these questions, as well as documenting any changes in economic status, race and ethnicity, literacy, and age of Richmond's female working population between 1860 and 1870 is the goal of this study.

CHAPTER 1

The Climate in Richmond, 1850-1870

To understand the changes in female employment patterns which occurred after the Civil War, it is imperative to examine the social, economic, and political status of Richmond prior to the war. These circumstances affected the wartime conditions and were not without influence on the post-war climate. In 1850 Richmond's population was 30,280, and a major topic of the decade was slavery.[1] There was considerable discussion in the South concerning the peculiar institution. Abolitionists from the North strongly criticized the southern slaveowners and called for an end to slavery nationwide; the citizens of Richmond were upset, despite the fact that few citydwellers owned any slaves.[2] The politics of slavery and fear of uprisings increased tension in the city and consequently slaves were closely monitored, but by 1850 "a large number of slaves had managed to move into free black neighborhoods."[3]

Politics was certainly an important aspect of life in the United States during this decade, and Richmond was no exception. In 1851 the city modified its election system so that the Mayor and other offices were no longer elected by council members, but by the people themselves.[4] Also in this year, several sources indicate the city increased the number of political subdivisions from three to five. The new divisions were based on population density, where the old divisions usually coincided with neighborhoods and

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[1]William Asbury Christian, Richmond: Her Past and Present (Richmond: L.H. Jenkins, 1912), 167.

[2]Michael B. Chesson, Richmond After the War, 1865-1890 (Richmond: Virginia State Library, 1981), 15.

[3]Ibid., 16.

[4]Christian, 174.

topography.[5] However, the census of 1860 was conducted on the basis of three wards, and not until the census of 1870 were five recorded. In 1859, as the city looked toward the election of 1860, and immediately after John Brown's "raid," "Virginia's Capital began busily preparing for war -- if war should come. Yet Richmond was prospering."[6]

Richmond's antebellum economy grew significantly during the first half of the decade, due to a strong base of diversified industries and her role as a transportation hub. The city led the South in manufacturing. Three primary industries were tobacco manufacturing, wheat and corn milling, and metalworking.[7] Prosperity in industry was aided by Richmond's role as transportation center, with both shipping and rail available. However, these lines of transportation depended heavily on co-operation from the North, and 1859 brought changes to transportation routes, and, subsequently, to Richmond's economy in general.

In 1859 "the merchants of the city met and decided to establish a direct line of ships between Richmond and Liverpool, so as to be independent of the North . . . .The manufacture of all kinds of articles in the city was encouraged." Richmond was prosperous during the first half of 1860 when construction of the Richmond-Lynchburg Railroad began; locomotives were built in town, and new churches, hotels, and a sugar refinery went up.[8] Up to this time, the political unrest that began in 1859 had little impact on the everyday lives of Richmonders, but the second half of 1860 arrived with increased political tensions and significant effects on the well-being of Richmond's citizens.

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[5]Chesson, 127; Virginius Dabney, Richmond, The Story of a City (Garden City, New York: Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1976), 150.

[6]Mary N. Stanard, Richmond-Its People and Its Story (Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott Company, 1923), 158.

[7]Allan Pred, Urban Growth and City Systems in the United States, 1840-1860 (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1980), 114; Chesson, 134.

[8]Christian, 204, 208.

Richmond's population in 1860 reached 37,910, (see Table 1 p. 15) an absolute increase since 1840 of 20,550.[9] Industry had reached an unsurpassed level of production. But by December of 1860,

> Manufacturers began to close down, throwing hundreds out of work; business became dull and banks suspended specie payment. The city was filled with her own unemployed. . . .[10]

In 1860 the economy of Richmond suffered as a result of the election of Abraham Lincoln and the secession of South Carolina.

Life in Richmond would never be the same, and her people seemed to know this. They were torn politically between loyalty to the South and loyalty to the Union. In early 1861 the Virginia Legislature proposed a Peace Conference in an effort to avert the war, while at the same time seven southern states organized the Southern Confederacy.[11] Secession was looming, but

> Richmond was filled with men devoted to the Union which their fathers had so large a part in constructing -- to which Virginia had given the orator whose voice had hastened the Revolution into being, the author of the Declaration of Independence, the expounder of the Constitution, seven of the fifteen Presidents . . . .[12]

The women of Richmond, however,

> were among the most ardent secessionists of all. The girls at the Richmond Female Institute raised the Confederate flag on April 14, and claimed that it was the first to be displayed in the city. When hostilities actually began . . . many suitors were informed . . . that unless they wore the uniform of the Confederacy, they would have to look elsewhere for feminine companionship.

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[9]Pred, 12-13, 115.

[10]Christian, 213.

[11]Stanard, 161.

[12]Ibid., 158.

The Ordinance of Secession was adopted by the Virginia Convention on April 17, 1861, by a vote of 103 to 43.[13] In June 1861, Richmond became the capital of the Confederacy.[14]

Between 1861 and the evacuation of Richmond four years later, the city endured, among other things, strident conflicts between City Council and the Confederate government, dramatic increases in inflation, and food and fuel shortages. City Council did try, however, to aid the poor and families of soldiers despite these difficult circumstances,[15] but these hardships showed no signs of diminishing as the war drew to a close.

The physical and emotional destruction of Richmond during the Civil War was overwhelming. Before Union soldiers arrived and as people began to evacuate the city, fires were set to destroy food, banks, ammunition, factories, and anything else considered useful to the North. "Between eight and twelve hundred buildings were destroyed in what came to be known as the Burnt District -- an area of the city that included nine-tenths of the business district and four-fifths of the food suppliers."[16] The ironworks were most heavily damaged, followed by retailer, wholesaler, and professional establishments.

> Most of the business men and women who lost their stores and merchandise during the evacuation never recovered. Only about 35 percent of the merchants burned out or looted in April 1865 were back in business by 1871. When the work of Reconstruction began, Richmonders concentrated on rebuilding offices, banks and stores. Few mills or foundries were rebuilt during the first two years after the war.[17]

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[13]Dabney, 161; Stanard, 164-165.

[14]Chesson, 25.

[15]Ibid., 25-46.

[16]Ibid., 59.

[17]Ibid., 60.

Full recovery was also slowed by the length of time needed to repair transportation systems such as the James River canal and the railroads. Despite the slow progress, Richmond continued to rebuild.

Reconstruction occurred in three distinct phases. The first phase began April 3, 1865, with the occupation of Richmond by Union troops and lasted until Congress passed the First Reconstruction Act on March 2, 1867. Phase two started in March, 1867, and ended April, 1868, when Virginia's Constitutional Convention adjourned. Military Reconstruction was the final phase, from April, 1868, until Virginia was readmitted to the Union on January 24, 1870.[18] By June 1870, Richmond's population had increased by 35% since 1860 to 51,038 (see Table 1, p. 15).

The war had several almost contradictory effects on the city. First, and most obvious, the city's male population declined sharply and only slowly recovered. This is evident in Table 2, p.15, which shows that the male population increased only 17% between 1860 and 1870, while the female population increased by 54% during the same period. The war's effect on industry was mixed, in Richmond and nationally.

In Richmond there were many jobs in government and industry during the war, but the high inflation rate of Confederate currency meant most people were living on almost nothing. Food prices were ridiculously high and lack of food for their families led some women to participate in the so-called Bread Riot of 1863. Women looted stores when they were unable to obtain bread at the same prices paid by the Confederate government, as opposed to high private prices.[19] Food was not the only precious commodity in short supply, however. With the influx of refugees, including Confederate wives who could not work farms alone and soldiers on leave, living space was at a premium, and consequently rents were prohibitively high. Population changes were probably the most significant

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[18]Ibid., 88, 96, 104.

[19]Chesson, 40.

aspect of Richmond's evolution after the War itself, and of course, the war had an impact on the surviving pre-war population.

Between 1860 and 1870 Richmond's population changed in three important ways. First, during the war itself the population increased from about 38,000 in 1860 to somewhere between 90,000 and 150,000. When the war ended the population decreased almost as drastically with the withdrawal of Confederate troops. Second, most of the increase after the war was a migration of rural non-whites to Virginia's capital where they knew that food, shelter, and medical attention would be provided by the Freedmen's Bureau. Table 2, p. 15 demonstrates this influx if one compares the total non-white population for 1860 of 14,275 (free blacks plus slaves) to the total non-white population for 1870 of 23,110. There was an increase in the non-white population of 62%, while the white population only increased by 18%. (The city was 62% white in 1860 and 54% white in 1870.) This migration occurred despite the Union Army's attempt to restrict immigration into Richmond and the United States government's relocation of large numbers of non-whites and whites to their rural homes. A decline in the foreign immigrant population was the third change. Some immigrants died during the war; others fled to the North. Richmond was becoming less and less like the cities of the North which she had barely resembled prior to the war.[20]

Richmond was a less important American city in 1865 than in 1860, and even less significant in 1870.[21] The decay which began during the war continued long after the conclusion of the war. Even though Richmond had twice as many manufacturers in 1870 (531) as in 1860 (262), the total value of their manufactured products had fallen by over one million dollars, a drop of 15%, which reflected the fact that postwar factories and shops were smaller than those before the war. "Of the city's three big industries,

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[20]Ibid., 117-119.

[21]Ibid., 88.

Richmond's ironworks was the only one that increased the value of its product from 1860 to 1870."[22] Mail to New York and the North was reestablished, and sutler's stores sprang up wherever they could find space, offering food and supplies. But Confederate money was worthless and no one had United States money. The tobacco exchange opened on June 19, 1866, and despite the restrictions of military rule, eleven banks were open by mid-1867.[23] In Richmond: Her Past and Present, W. Ashbury Christian recalled, Christmas 1869 "was like the old-time Christmas. It seemed as if Richmond was again coming back to her old self." By 1870, businesses were reviving and Richmonders felt a new era had arrived.[24] But, in truth, there were other factors besides industry and population which affected the post-war changes in Richmond, and they indicated that the new era had yet to arrive.

In 1860, according to Emory Thomas, "Richmond supported six public schools and twenty-three private primaries and academies in 1860."[25] although as Virginius Dabney notes, "Richmond had no public schools or public library, in the modern sense, before the Civil War . . . ."[26] These are not, in fact, contradictory statements, as Dabney is referring to a formal public school system, and Thomas to individually operated schools which were open to the public. Not surprisingly, there had been little effort to educate free blacks among white Richmonders, who also disapproved of northerners teaching them.[27] By 1869, though, "a group of Richmond citizens, apparently acting under the impetus of

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[22]Ibid., 130-132, 138.

[23]Christian, 264, 278; Stanard, 216-217.

[24]Christian, 311, 313.

[25]Emory M. Thomas, The Confederate State of Richmond: A Biography of the Capital (Austin, Texas: The University of Texas Press, 1971), 30.

[26]Dabney, 140.

[27]Chesson, 101.

the Freedmen's Bureau, petitioned City Council . . . to provide a citywide system of public schools. This was several months before the voters of Virginia ratified the new constitution, calling for a statewide system."[28] Richmond made a strong effort to improve education after the war, an effort that would result in jobs for some women. Unfortunately, two of Richmond's most uneducated groups, non-whites and paupers, had little impact on the changes underway.

In 1867 there were only 89 almshouse inmates: 88 white women, 1 black woman, far fewer than the 426 there were in 1860. This is a rather remarkable statistic considering the long period of recovery and the concomitant economic hardships. A possible explanation for this low number is that post-war almshouses were run by the military under very strict rules, and most people went there only as a last resort.[29] The same explanation might also account for the fact that there was only one Negro, another remarkable statistic, in light of the significant increase in the city's non-white population resulting from the migration of rural ex-slaves after Emancipation.

The immigration of non-whites to Richmond posed some problems. "Those who had been free blacks before the war did not always cooperate with those who had been urban slaves; neither had much in common with freedmen from rural areas." And "unlike the freedmen who came from rural Virginia to Richmond during and after the war, blacks who had lived in the antebellum city often had some education and property, especially if they had been free."[30] Table 3, p. 16, and Figure 1, p. 17, show a comparison between the property values of free working non-white women and white women, for those women owning property.[31]

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[28]Dabney, 213.

[29]Chesson, 75-76.

[30]Ibid., 97, 100.

[31]For further discussion of wealth distribution, see pages 39-40 and 52-53.

After the war, although many women remained unskilled, there was a significant change in the labor force. "Social restrictions on female labor had relaxed as women worked in war industries and government offices. Postwar manufacturers found that women and children, both white and black, would work for less than adult males." By 1870 the number of free women working in factories had tripled since 1860; many women were working in tobacco factories.[32] The fact that many large slaveholders in 1860 were tobacco manufacturers probably accounts for the large number of non-white women employed in similar jobs after Emancipation; they most probably continued in the same occupations despite thier change of status.[33] The majority of women, however, did not work in factories. They held unskilled and service occupations that varied according to their race or ethnicity and corresponding social status.

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[32]Chesson., 133.

[33]Robert S. Starobin, Industrial Slavery in the South (New York: Oxford University Press, 1970), 15-17; Richard C. Wade, Slavery in the Cities: The South 1820-1860 (New York: Oxford University Press, 1964), 33-35.

TABLE 1

POPULATION OF RICHMOND BY SEX

	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL
1860	20,174	17,736	37,910
1870	23,637	27,401	51,038

POPULATION OF RICHMOND BY RACE

	WHITE	FREE BLACK	SLAVE	TOTAL
1860	23,635	2,576	11,699	37,910
1870	27,928	23,110	--------	51,038

TABLE 2

TOTAL POPULATION OF RICHMOND BY RACE AND SEX FOR 1860

	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL
WHITE	12,396	11,239	23,635
FREE BLACK	1,142	1,434	2,576
SLAVE	6,636	5,063	11,699

Note: The printed census for 1870 lists population by race and sex in different tables, consequently a comparison of the population of 1860 to that of 1870 by race and sex is not possible unless a manual count is made. Such a count was outside the scope of this study.

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Eighth Census of the United States, I, 1860, Population Statistics (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1864), 519; U.S. Bureau of the Census, Ninth Census of the United States, I, 1870, Population Statistics (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1872), 280, 655.

TABLE 3

AVERAGE WORTH FOR EMPLOYED FREE WOMEN (BY RACE) 1860

	REAL PROPERTY	PERSONAL PROPERTY
BLACK	$895 (11)	$122 (37)
WHITE	$7566 (112)	$4639 (257)
MULATTO	$1134 (16)	$125 (17)

AVERAGE WORTH FOR EMPLOYED WOMEN (BY RACE) 1870

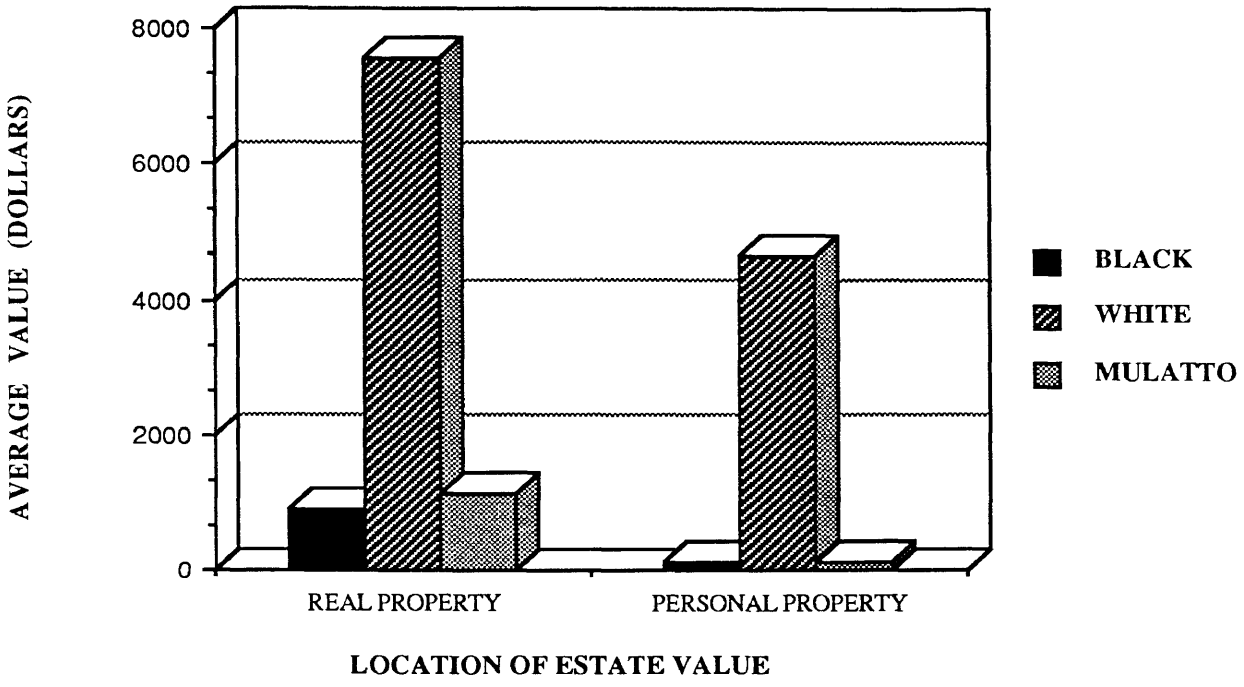
	REAL PROPERTY	PERSONAL PROPERTY
BLACK	$1651 (12)	$280 (16)
WHITE	$3383 (41)	$366 (64)
MULATTO	$1875 (4)	$255 (11)

Numbers in parentheses indicate number of women whose property composed the average.

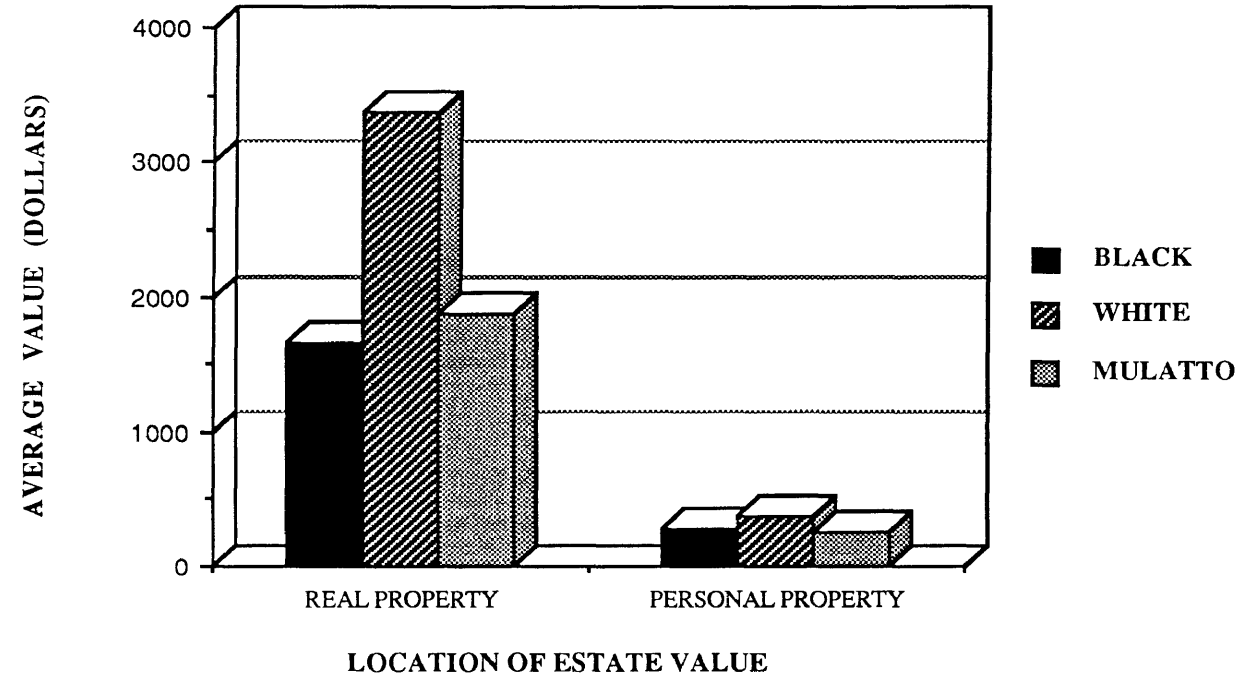
Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Eighth Census of the United States for the City of Richmond, Virginia, 1860 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office 1864), microfilm.;U.S. Bureau of the Census, Ninth Census of the United States for the City of Richmond, Virginia, 1870 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office 1872), microfilm.

FIGURE 1

AVERAGE WORTH FOR EMPLOYED FREE WOMEN BY RACE - 1860



AVERAGE WORTH FOR EMPLOYED WOMEN BY RACE- 1870



CHAPTER 2

Black Women and Their Work, 1850-1870

The work of black women, both slave and free, in antebellum Richmond is well worth investigating as it reflects their social and economic status. In general, urban slavery was on the decline by 1860 in major southern industrial centers; however, Richmond was an exception. Claudia Goldin shows that in 1860 both the city's slave and free black populations were at a fifty year high.[1]

While the slavery issue was creating tension for the South and various southern communities were making moves to send Negroes "back whence they came," one Northern visitor to Richmond noted, "Among the people you see in the streets, full half, I should think, are more or less of negro blood, and a very decent civil people these seem, in general to be; more so than the laboring class of whites . . . many of the colored ladies were dressed not only expensively, but with good taste and effect, after the latest Parisian mode."[2] Such pride in their appearance carried over to their work. Servants, particularly those who performed domestic services in old Virginia families, were as proud of their status as if the home were their own, according to an antebellum white Virginian.[3] There were differences, however, between domestic servants and the common laborers, both urban and rural.

Most conspicuous is the difference between the type of work and the sex of the worker. Rural slaves usually lived on large plantations requiring many field hands and few domestics, and although women did work the fields, men were in the majority.

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[1]Claudia D. Goldin, Urban Slavery in the American South 1820-1869 (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1976), 52.

[2]Frederick Law Olmsted, A Journey in the Seaboard Slave States-In the Years 1853-54 with Remarks on Their Economy (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1904), 55, 31.

[3]Samuel Mordecai, Richmond in By-Gone Days (Richmond: West & Johnston, Publishers, 1860), 350.

> Urban slavery increasingly contained an imbalance between male and female Negroes. As early as 1820 women had begun to outnumber men; by 1860 the difference was striking . . . later . . . owners began to sell their younger males to planters . . . . Left behind in the cities was a growing surplus of women.[4]

Richmond was different, however, as it had a large number of factories. Slaves were employed in factories--both as the property of manufacturers and by hire;[5] in 1860 male slaves outnumbered females 6,636 to 5,063.[6] (also see Table 2, p. 15) Slave women did constitute the majority of domestic workers.[7] These male-female ratios did not hold true for free blacks, and the status of free blacks differed between the Upper and Lower South. "As a general rule, Lower South free Negroes were not only more urban and light-skinned, but better educated, more skilled, and more closely connected with whites than those of the Upper South." There were also many more free Negro women than men in the South, unlike the slave and white populations, and the majority of them lived in the cities.[8]

Free Negroes tended to congregate in the cities because they were employed primarily in service occupations, the need for which was greatest in urban areas. In Richmond, "by 1860 they owned and operated seven grocery stores, three confectioneries, two fruit shops, fifteen barbershops and an excellent livery stable. One free Negro family in four owned property."[9] These figures, of course, refer to free Negroes as a population,

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[4] Wade, 23.

[5]Goldin, 26-27, 45-46.

[6]Ibid, 329-330.

[7]Ira Berlin, Slaves Without Masters: The Free Negro in the Antebellum South (New York: Panteon Books, 1974), 151-52.

[8]Ibid., 177, 181.

[9]Dabney, 155.

and not to women specifically. Women did not generally run stores, although some did own property, as shown in Table 3 p. 16, and Figure 1, p. 17.

"Southern cities allowed few opportunities for lucrative employment to women of any color. Like poor white women, most free Negro women worked as cooks, laundresses, housekeepers and peddlers [see Appendix A]. But many more free Negro than white women were forced to work."[10] Regardless of their gender, Negroes had little to choose from in terms of occupations. Even after the war, black men, former slaves who had been trained with a skill, often had to take a position requiring no skill, and therefore offering very little money. This situation made it necessary for the wives of these men to work as well in order for their families to survive. In fact, "black women were about twice as likely to work as white women, even if those white women were immigrants."[11] Other occupations of female free Negroes included nursing, dressmaking, and working in factories.

"Richmond was first among American cities in her adaptation of slave labor to factories. Industry was the largest employer of Negroes in non-domestic jobs. Tobacco and iron factories in particular relied on slaves, either hired from other masters or belonging to factory owners. Tobacco factories owned more than half of the workers."[12] Depending on the time of year, slaves were often rented by their masters to other households or factories. "In Richmond there were 'several hiring sections' where employers could find 'crowds of servants, men, women, boys and girls, for hire' even in a slack period . . . these stands played an important role in the constant redistribution of labor resources in Dixie's towns."[13] Despite the significant contributions to the labor force by Negroes,

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[10]Berlin, 220-221.

[11]Degler, 389.

[12]Wade, 33-36

[13]Ibid., 42-43.

however, there were many restrictions as to how far they could advance, before and after the war.

In the decades preceding the war, southern white craftsmen applied increasing pressure to force Negroes from one occupation after another. And, "though no two cities had the same categories, all tried to keep colored workers out of the higher skills."[14] Consequently, in order to survive, many free blacks and slaves turned to illegal methods of earning money. Brothels (sometimes listed as Boarding Houses on the census records) and gambling halls operated in private homes and commercial spaces and were patronized by both races. Some non-whites had their own stores or restaurants or dealt in cash or barter transactions. All of these activities carried heavy penalties should one get caught.[15]

After the war, despite being heavily outnumbered, white males maintained power in Richmond for the rest of the decade. As a result, "able black workers left Richmond for better opportunities in northern cities far earlier than their counterparts elsewhere in the urban South."[16] It is obvious that Negroes were treated horribly. In the antebellum South they were deprived of decent occupations and in Richmond were prohibited from riding in carriages, except when a menial, and required to step aside when encountering a white on the street.[17] It should not necessarily be assumed that whites, and white women, were substantially better off, socially or economically. Almost certainly they were not, at least economically, as much of the white pre-war population consisted of immigrants. Poor white women in the South were often of a similar social and economic status as non-white women.

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[14]Ibid., 273-74.

[15]Chesson, 16.

[16]Ibid., xvi.

[17]Kenneth M. Stamp, The Peculiar Institution (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc. 1956, Eleventh printing, 1978), 209.

CHAPTER 3

The Work of Native-Born and Immigrant White Women, 1850-1870

During the Civil War occupations of women changed, especially for white women. Women who had run households or 'gentlewomen' who had not worked outside the home were suddenly making clothes and tents for soldiers or working in government offices. The enormous shortage of men during the war pushed women of all social and economic statuses to provide for themselves and their families, as well as to provide services for their community and the soldiers. They sacrificed much for the war effort.

> The ladies of the city [Richmond] played an important part in its Confederate history. After First Manassas, they threw open the doors of their homes to the refugees and the wounded. From all parts of the South, women arrived to fill positions in the many government departments; to volunteer their services to the always crowded hospitals, or to nurse members of their own families. They strengthened the morale of their men in office and in the field. Sometimes they went hungry . . . . A gentle-born lady who worked in the Treasury Department was without shoes.[1]

The war had a significant impact on the jobs of native white and immigrant women after the war as well, but to understand fully the change which occurred, the occupations of these women prior to the war must be examined first.

"Throughout the nineteenth century the single largest occupation of women was domestic service. In 1850 there were more women domestic servants than women in teaching and manufacturing combined."[2] Table 4, p. 28 and Figure 2, p. 29 show that for Richmond, the women working in Service/Unskilled Labor jobs constituted almost 70% of the free

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[1]Anne F. Scott, The Southern Lady-From Pedestal to Politics, 1830-1930 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970), 106.; Katherine M. Jones, Ladies of Richmond--Confederate Capital (New York: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, Inc., 1962), xiv.

[2]Degler, 372, 375.

female working population in 1860. Seventy-two percent of these women were white; of that 72%, over 50% of them were immigrants. Prior to 1840 and the great influx of immigrants to this country, especially the Irish and the Germans, many domestic positions were held by single white, native-born women who needed to support themselves or assist their families financially. When the immigrants began filling these positions, "domestic service lost status. Native-born women feared they would lose social position if they competed with immigrant labor."[3] Women concerned about their social status had few other choices of work outside the home. In the North, some did choose to work in the mills, most often textile mills. Richmond had no textile mills in 1860. For the most part, regardless of the city, married white, native-born women did not work outside the home.[4]

There were ways for married women to add to the family income, and they took advantage of them. Some took work into their homes by becoming seamstresses, doing laundry or running employment agencies.[5] In 1860 there were 350 seamstresses in Richmond, 11% of whom were non-white; by 1870 that number had grown to 466, with 32.2% non-white. [See Appendix A] Women who served as boardinghouse keepers, and those who let only one room, were able to contribute financially to the family and provide a service to the community, a much needed service in wartime Richmond. "As the capital's population swelled, the numbers of hotels, boardinghouses, restaurants, bars and bawdy houses expanded."[6] For American women in general,

> In free households female work--including taking in boarders, washing their clothes, and cooking for them--might account for as much income as working class husbands gained from their own employment. If the

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[3]Lynn Y. Wiener, From Working Girl to Working Mother: The Female Labor Force in the United States, 1820-1980 (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1985), 15.

[4]Thomas, 21-22.

[5]Degler, 393.

[6]Thomas, 21.

> husband's work was seasonal or erratic, the steady income from taking in boarders could be crucial to the family's survival.[7]

After the war, running a boardinghouse was still a common occupation, especially among women with families to support, when the male head of the house was evidently no longer present. In Richmond, however, the number of boardinghouses operated by women declined from 36 (all white) to 10 (2 non-white) [see Appendix A]. That decline may reflect the fact that the war and postwar years created another use for the term 'boardinghouse'; it became synonymous with brothel.

In Richmond, prostitution, which was not mentioned in antebellum sources, was widespread during the mid and late 1860s. During the war "the seamier side of city life could be found in Shockoe Valley, especially in the neighborhood of Cash Corner . . . . Here the criminal class congregated. Bars, brothels, and gambling dens, or hells, attracted the high and low of the Confederacy. With so many men in the city, it quickly became the prostitution capital of the South."[8] In the 1870 census there were quite a few instances of women listed as "Boardinghouse Keeper," only to have their names followed by several women, at the same residence, whose occupations were "Prostitute." Prostitution was one occupation which was not racially or ethnically exclusive. Blacks, mulattoes, and whites, immigrant and native-born, all practiced this "profession."[9] Table 4, p. 28 and Figure 2, p. 29 show a 470% increase in the percentage of women working in the Lodging/ Food/Entertainment Services category with increases of over 325% for both blacks and mulattoes. These increases are attributable almost entirely to the number of prostitutes recorded in 1870; although the census lists no prostitutes in 1860, no doubt there were

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[7]Linda K. Kerber and Jane DeHart Mathews, ed., Women's America--Refocusing the Past (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982), 97.

[8]Chesson, 48.

[9]See p. 38 for percentages of native and foreign-born blacks, mulattoes, and whites employed as prostitutues in 1870.

some, omitted as a result of either the qualms of census-takers or the reluctance of practitioners of this profession to acknowledge their occupation. [See Appendix A to compare the number of women employed in this category in 1860 and 1870.]

Many occupations were not open to non-white and immigrant women. Teaching is one such occupation. Only after 1840 did women begin to replace men as teachers, and not until after the war did the growing interest in education, especially in the South, create a great demand for teachers. Probably the most significant reason for the increase in the number of female teachers was that the pay was so low that men could not support their families on such salaries. When it was socially acceptable for women to teach, administrators quickly discovered that they would and could work for much less. The fact that women would work for lower salaries actually has a great deal to to with their entrance into the postwar workforce. This increased demand coincided with the drop in the male population. With the need for teachers and women needing to work, female teachers were more widely accepted. That this occupation was particularly suitable for women could be explained by the argument "that women had a duty to be teachers because their natural role as mothers suited them to the care of young children."[10] Despite all of these favorable factors, the number of teachers in Richmond actually declined between 1860 and 1870 from 82 to 70 [see Appendix A]. The 1870 census rolls for Richmond show no immigrant teachers and only seven non-white teachers, but they show many more non-whites and immigrants who were literate and successful business women. Those who taught in the Freedmen's Bureau schools were white Northerners. However, according to Michael Chesson, black children from well-to-do families attended privately supported schools which were administered by blacks, possibly those found on the census rolls.

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[10]Scott, 110-111; Kathryn K. Sklar, "Catherine Beecher: Transforming the Teaching Profession," in Women's America-Refocusing the Past (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982) 140, 146; Degler, 380.

For the United States as a whole, "in 1870 it was found that 14.7 percent of the female population 16 years of age and over were breadwinners, and by 1900 the percentage was 20.6 percent."[11] Yet by the end of the nineteenth century, the average salary for a factory girl who worked 60 hours a week was only five or six dollars.

> These were the wages . . . of an experienced, not a beginning worker. At the same time . . . the lowest level of male work was earning on the average eight dollars a week. Domestic servants, four-fifths of whom were women and the largest single category of women workers, earned in 1900 between two and five dollars a week, and their work week could reach . . . 12 hours a day.[12]

No similar figures for Richmond in 1860 or 1870 were found, but obviously women were paid incredibly poorly. Ironically, women contributed more than men to the development of new factories. Owners could rely on a steady supply of women willing to work for very little, thereby enabling them to get their factories established and yet, these women, many of whom supported families, were compensated far below their male counterparts.

Despite the tremendous increase in Richmond's wartime and postwar free female labor force, the postwar force being predominantly composed of emancipated blacks, there was a group of working women whose numbers declined significantly after the war. In pre-war Richmond, as in other Southern cities, foreign immigrants, especially those from Ireland and Germany, were major forces, both socially and economically.[13] Irish and German immigrants in antebellum Richmond were the largest group of free working women comprising 36.6% of the white working population, the majority working as domestics or servants. Very few owned property. In 1870, the jobs formerly held by

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[11]Anne F. Scott, ed., The American Woman-Who Was She? (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1971), 13.

[12]Degler, 382.

[13]Ira Berlin and Herbert G. Gutman, "Natives and Immigrants, Free Men and Slaves: Urban Workingmen in the Antebellum American South" American Historical Review 88 (December 1983): 1180.

immigrant women were occupied by free blacks, with immigrant women now only 21.5% of the white working population. The total number of employed female immigrants dropped sharply. In 1860, working female immigrants constituted 26.7% of the free working female population of Richmond. By 1870 they were only 3% of the population (see Table 5, p. 30 and Figure 3, p. 31) Interestingly, of the immigrant women employed after the war, most owned property. (See Chapter 4)

Regardless of race, ethnicity or age, most women, in the nineteenth century, whether earning wages or keeping their own houses, worked in unskilled or semi-skilled occupations. Even women listed as nurses, whose numbers increased after the war (although it is not possible to tell from the census records if these women were actually medical nurses or simply domestic servants taking care of children), were untrained, as the medical profession was not strictly regulated until much later. Women who worked outside the home in the nineteenth century, whether white or non-white, worked long hours for very little pay. In the Richmond census for 1860 and 1870, almost every women over the age of 10, who did not have some other occupation, was listed as "Keeping House" or "Housekeeper." This was a full-time job, especially prior to modern conveniences. It should be remembered, too, that any woman working outside the home usually did double duty as housekeeper, in addition to another job. With this in mind, it will seem remarkable that some women achieved as much as they did, especially in postwar Richmond. A quantitative comparison of occupations, literacy, economic status, age, and racial and ethnic changes will show where Richmond women improved and where they suffered setbacks between 1860 and 1870.

TABLE 4

NUMBER OF FREE WOMEN IN EACH OCCUPATIONAL CATEGORY 1860 AND 1870

	1860	1870
SERVICE/UNSKILLED LABOR	**1449**	**4139**
Non-white	404	3861
White	1045	278
EDUCATION/HEALTH SERVICES	**123**	**75**
Non-white	15	7
White	108	68
LODGING/FOOD/ENTERTAINMENT SERVICES	**43**	**202**
Non-white	4	130
White	39	72
MERCHANT	**132**	**95**
Non-white	5	13
White	127	82
SKILLED TRADES	**369**	**501**
Non-white	41	152
White	328	349
FACTORY	**137**	**237**
Non-white	126	219
White	11	18

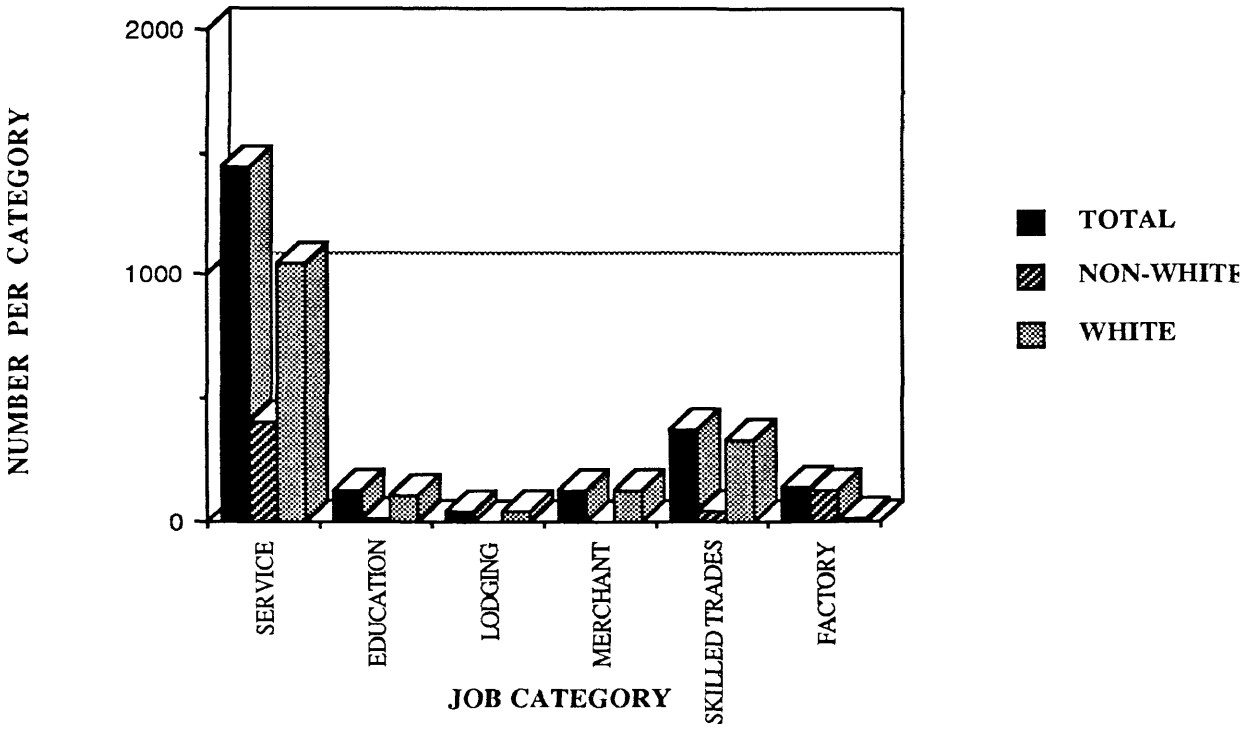
Based on the total number of women with occupations outside of the home in 1860 (2253) and 1870 (5249).

See Appendix A for a complete listing of the jobs in each category.

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Eighth Census of the United States for the City of Richmond, Virginia, 1860 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1864) microfilm.; U.S. Bureau of the Census, Ninth Census of the United States for the City of Richmond, Virginia, 1870 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1872) microfilm.

FIGURE 2

NUMBER OF FREE WOMEN IN EACH OCCUPATIONAL CATEGORY - 1860



NUMBER OF FREE WOMEN IN EACH OCCUPATIONAL CATEGORY - 1870

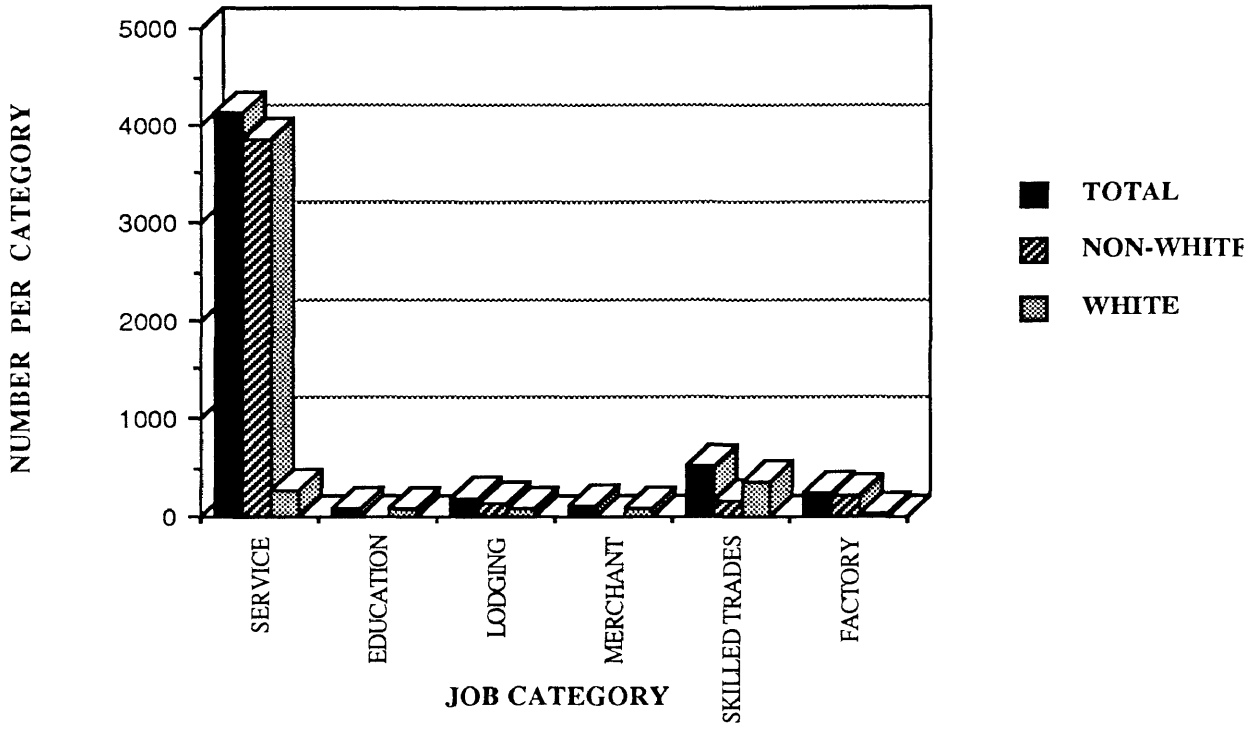


TABLE 5

EMPLOYED FREE FEMALE POPULATION OF RICHMOND BY RACE AND ETHNICITY 1860[14]

	VIRGINIA	REST OF U.S.[15]	N. AMERICA[16]	EUROPE
BLACK	366 (16.2%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (0.04%)
WHITE	879 (39.0%)	153 (6.8%)	6 (0.04%)	600 (26.63%)
MULATTO	227 (10.1%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
TOTAL	**1472 (65.3%)**	**153 (6.8%)**	**6 (0.27%)**	**601 (26.7%)**

EMPLOYED FEMALE POPULATION OF RICHMOND BY RACE AND ETHNICITY 1870[17]

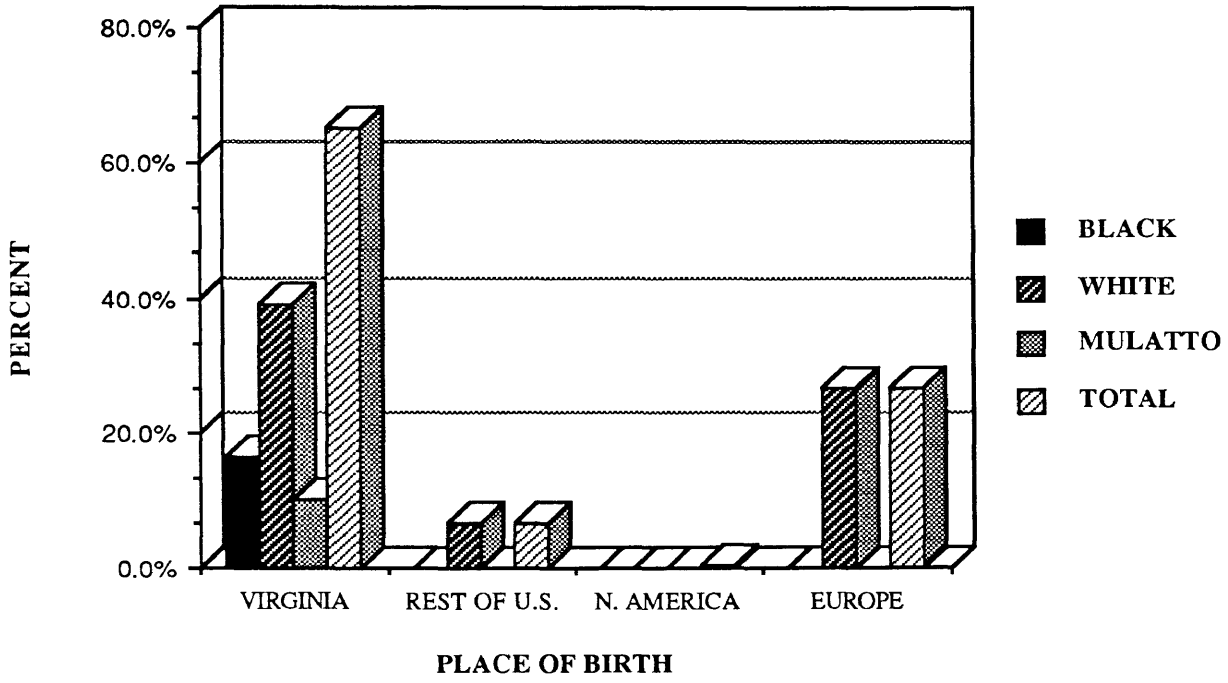
	VIRGINIA	REST OF U.S.[18]	N. AMERICA[19]	EUROPE
BLACK	3911 (74.5%)	18 (0.3%)	2 (0.04%)	0 (0%)
WHITE	602 (11.5%)	80 (1.5%)	2 (0.04%)	187 (3.6%)
MULATTO	438 (8.3%)	8 (0.1%)	0 (0%)	1 (0.02%)
TOTAL	**4951 (94.3%)**	**106 (2.0%)**	**4 (0.07%)**	**188 (3.6%)**

[14]The percentages are based on a total of 2253 women in 1860; 21 women, or 0.9% had an Unknown place of birth.
[15]Rest of U.S. includes all other states admitted to the Union as of this year.
[16]North America includes only Mexico, Canada, Nassau and Jamaica.
[17]The percentages are based on a total of 5249 women in 1870.
[18]Same as 2 above.
[19]Same as 3 above.

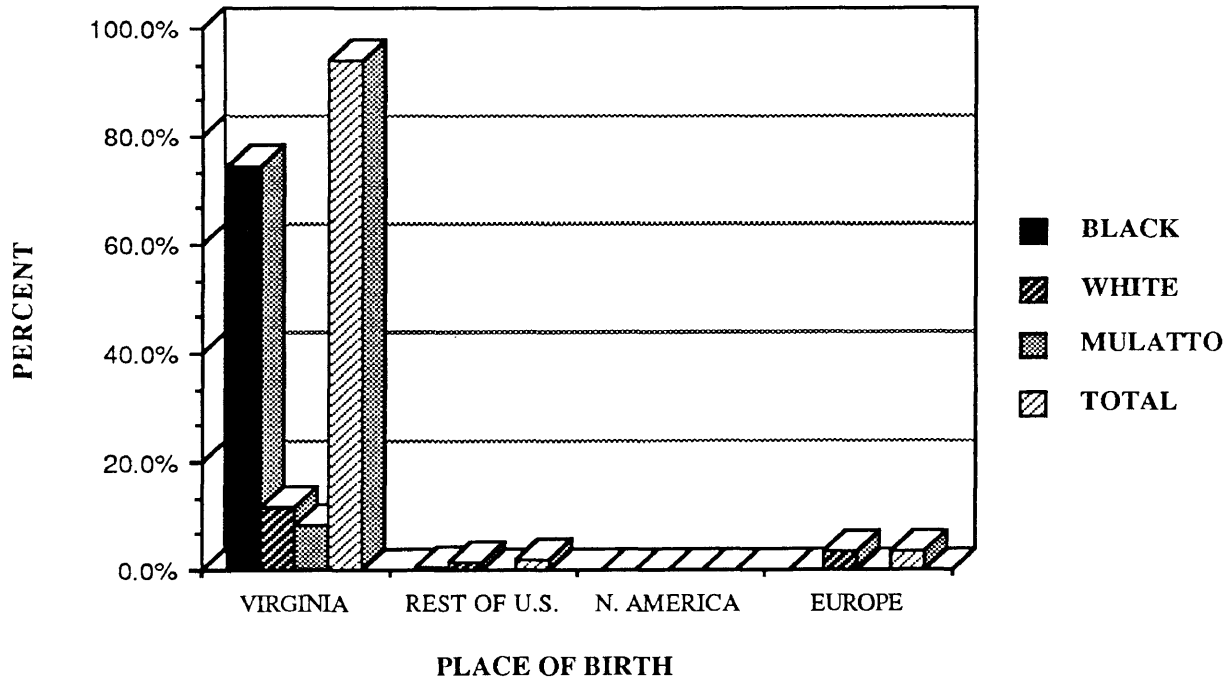
Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Eighth Census of the United States for the City of Richmond, Virginia, 1860 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1864) microfilm; U.S. Bureau of the Census, Ninth Census of the United States for the City of Richmond, Virginia, 1870 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1872) microfilm.

FIGURE 3

EMPLOYED FREE FEMALE POPULATION OF RICHMOND BY RACE AND ETHNICITY - 1860



EMPLOYED FEMALE POPULATION OF RICHMOND BY RACE AND ETHNICITY - 1870



CHAPTER 4

Female Employment in Richmond in 1860 and 1870

Richmond in 1860 was a city dominated by men, a city whose inhabitants thought it would continue to prosper and grow in national and international importance. It was a city that had steadily increased in population during the last twenty years. To analyze the changes which took place for working women between 1860 and 1870, one must first consider that there were 17,736 women living in Richmond in 1860. Of those, 11,239 were white, 1,434 were free blacks, and 5,063 were slaves (see Table 2, p. 15). Slaves were not listed on the census with whites and free blacks, nor were they listed by occupation.[1] By 1870 there were 27,401 women residing in the city (see Table 1, p. 15). To understand the differences between women working in 1860 and those working in 1870, five areas must be evaluated: racial and ethnic changes, ages of working women, literacy rates, types of occupations, and economic status. However, there is a problem of incomparability in terms of the non-white work forces of 1860 and 1870. Therefore, comparisons between the working women of 1860 and 1870 must focus on white women, and will be supplemented by a brief analysis of the non-white work force.

Despite the fact that the majority of adult women worked at home as "housekeepers" or "keeping house," an impressive 2,253 women, 1,658 of whom were white, had some other form of employment recorded beside their names in the original census records; making white women almost 75% of the workforce recorded on the census for 1860.[2] Again, this does not include the several thousand slaves who were working but

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[1]Christian, 167 for population in 1850 (30,280 people) and Table 1, 15 for population in 1860.

[2]U.S. Bureau of the Census, Eighth Census of the United States, 1860, 1 Populaiton Statistics (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1864), 500-507.

not recorded on the census. Of the 11,239 white women in Richmond in 1860, which was over 50% of the total number of women recorded on the census of 1860, approximately 15% worked outside the home. When one considers that about one-third of all the women on the census were either too young or too old to work, the percentage is closer to 20%.[3] By 1870 the total female population of Richmond had reached 27,401, an increase of 35%, compared to the male population of 23,637, which only grew by 17% from 1860. The printed census for 1870 segregated working men and women and categorized them by age. The official record shows 4,938 women from age 10 to over 60 were employed. However, the list is of "Selected Occupations." A more accurate number, after counting each working woman on the rolls, is probably 5249 (see Table 6, p. 42), only 871 of whom were white; this figure demonstrates a dramatic drop in the percentage of white women in the total population of Richmond. Based on the figures here, then, and considering about one fourth of the women on the census were too old or too young to work, white employed women constituted 16.5% of Richmond women who worked outside the home in 1870. The racial distribution percentages, however, differ considerably between 1860 and 1870.

In 1860 the majority of white working women were born in Virginia (54%). Second in number were white women born in Europe (36%), primarily Ireland and Germany. Among white women, those born in the United States but outside of Virginia composed the next largest group with 9.2%, and those born oustide of the United States but in North American were the smallest group at only 0.3%.(see Table 5, p. 31 and Figure 3, p. 32). Non-white employed females who appeared on the 1860 census were all born in Virginia except one, who claimed a country in Europe as her place of birth.

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[3]U.S. Bureau of the Census, Eighth Census of the United States, 1860, 1, Population Statistics (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1864), 500-507.

As can be seen in Table 7, p. 43 and Figure 4, p. 44, Wards 1, 2, and 3 in 1860 all had more working whites than either blacks or mulattoes. Ward 2 alone, however, contained 58.3% of working white females. Therefore, it should not come as a surprise that in 1860 Ward 2 was the location for the majority of the property, real and personal, owned by working women in Richmond (see Table 11, p. 52 and Figure 7, p. 53).

By 1870, with the number of wards increased to five, the population distribution of white working women was a little more even. Clay ward had 15.7%, Jefferson 37.1%, Madison 28.2%, Marshall 5.2%, and Monroe 13.8% of white women working outside the home (see Table 7, p. 43 and Figure 4, p. 44). In 1860, Clay, Jefferson, and Madison were also known as 1st, 2nd, and 3rd wards, respectively. However, there is no territorial identity between them and the wards of 1870 which have the same names; consequently no population comparisons can be made.[4]

The ethnic and racial composition of the workforce was definitely affected by the war. Before the war there were 594 free black and mulatto women, 600 immigrant women (599 white, 1 black) and 1038 native-born white women working in the city of Richmond. Five years after the war ended, black working women numbered 4378, native-born white women 684, and foreign-born women only 187. A comparison of white working women shows, then, that in 1860 there were 1658 and in 1870 there were only 871 -- a drop of 787 or 52.5% working white women. Non-white women, previously last in numbers in the free workforce, now dominated. White women were outnumbered by more than 6 to 1 and immigrant women by 23 to 1. These numbers point to a drastic drop in the number of white women listing an occupation, despite the large increase in the total female population for 1870 (see Table 1, page 15).

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[4]U.S. Bureau of the Census, Eighth Census of the United States, 1860, 1, Population Statistics (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1864), 500-507.

Although population distribution of these women across the city cannot be compared easily since the wards of 1860 had no geographic association with those of 1870, it is interesting that in 1860 one ward constituted 58.5% of the white population of working women, and in 1870 over 60% of the white population lived in two wards. In both years the other wards' white population statistics were considerably lower. White women, the majority of women working in 1860, lived primarily in Ward 2, the largest of the three wards. By 1870, when non-white women outnumbered white, most white women lived in Jefferson and Madison wards, which also happened to be the two wards dominated by blacks and mulattoes (see Table 7, p.43 and Figure 4, p. 44).

Antebellum Richmond had a white female labor force that fell between the ages of 3 and 85. These numbers reflect women in this age group with listed occupations; whether the youngest actually worked is impossible to know. (See Table 8, p. 45 and Figure 4, p. 46). A great majority of the white female workforce for 1860 and 1870 fell between the ages of 15 and 45. In 1860 the women in this category constituted 80% of the white working women. For 1870 the percentage is 83.3% (see Table 8, p.45 and Figure 5, p. 46). Among the non-whites, 78% of the female workers recorded on the census of 1860 were between 15 and 45. In 1870 there was almost no shift in age, with 83.8% of the white working population between the ages of 15 and 45. Similarly, 79.8% of the non-whites on the census fell in this same category. However, there was a drop in the percentage of white women who worked past the age of 45. In 1860 the percentage was 18.2% and in 1870 it dropped to 12.6%. Among non-white women working after age 45, who appeared on the census, the percentages for 1860 and 1870 are about the same, approximately 15% in both years. This means, at least for 1870, that black women worked longer in life than did white women. They did not, however, have more to show for it.

Literacy rates were more favorable for whites prior to the war than after the war. In 1860 those who could not read were not distinguished from those who could not write; there was only one category listed in the census records. Of the 1,685 working white

women, only 190, or 11.5%, were illiterate. Of those illiterates, 5.8% lived in Ward 1, 81.1% in Ward 2, and 13.1% in Ward 3. (See Tables 9A &B, pp. 47-48 and Figures 6A&B, pp. 49-50). There is a considerable difference in the illiteracy rates for free blacks and mulattoes. Of the non-whites on the census in 1860, 199 blacks, or 33.4%, were illiterate versus 152 mulattoes, or 25.5%. Perhaps this is attributable to the fact that mulattoes, in general, had more privileges than blacks prior to the war, and education was one of them.

The census takers in 1870 were more specific than those in 1860 when they asked about literacy. They distinguished between ability to read and ability to write. The number of women unable to read, write or both is very high. While the actual number of working white women unable to read and write decreased between 1860 and 1870 from 190 to 157, the percentage increased from 11.5% to 18.3%. Jefferson ward contained the greatest number of illiterate white women with a total of 42.8%. For 1870, 20% more white women could not write than could not read. Approximately 70% of the non-whites working in Richmond in 1870 were illiterate. (See Tables 9A & B, pp. 47-48 and Figures 6A & B, pp. 49-50).

Before the war, the illiteracy rate hovered around 25% for the females of Richmond who were listed on the census with occupations. The majority of those unable to read and write were, not surprisingly, free blacks and mulattoes. A result of Emancipation was an influx into the free workforce of a large group of illiterate people, illiterate primarily because it had been illegal to teach slaves to read and write. However, since this study does not include the slave population, no direct comparison of literacy rates between 1860 and 1870 can be made. Although, with some exceptions, notably teachers and merchants, ability to read and write seemed to have little to do with the type of jobs held by Richmond women.

There was little to no consistency among the census takers in terms of the titles used in recording occupations. In this study, occupations were transcribed exactly as they

appeared, or as closely as possible allowing for illegible handwriting. Consequently, there tended to be many ways of describing the same job. A complete list of all jobs found and the corresponding number of women employed therein for 1860 and 1870 can be found in Appendix A. For ease of data assimilation, the list is divided into categories, and it is these categories upon which the data relating to occupations are based.

The largest number of white women were involved in domestic duties in 1860, but by 1870 that had changed. Domestics alone were over 42% of the white female workforce in 1860 but ony 23.8% by 1870. White women working in the category Service/Unskilled Labor, under which domestic duties fall, constituted 1,045 of 1,658 white women in the workforce in 1860 but decreased to 278 of 871 in 1870 (see Table 4, p. 29 and Figure 2, p. 30). What is significant is the racial and ethnic makeup of this category. White women, predominantly immigrants, were the largest group of free workers in 1860, representing 1,658 of 2,253, or 74.%, of workers listed on the census. By 1870 their numbers had dropped to 871 of 5,249, or 16.6%, of all workers. Blacks and mulattoes combined accounted for 4,378, or 83.4% of all workers. This dramatic turnaround in numbers is directly attributable to the war. With the huge influx of freed blacks into Richmond after Emancipation, the need was not as great for white service providers. Not only that, but when an occupation became dominated by a group of lower social status, it was no longer a desirable job for native-born white women.

Other job categories also demonstrated some change, though none as dramatic as Service/Unskilled Labor. For example, the area of Education and Health Services, representing a small segment of the workforce and actually declining in size among free women over the decade, was dominated in 1860 by white women, the majority of whom were teachers. White teachers were 88 of 1,658 of the white workforce, and although the actual number of white teachers declined to 65 of 871, the percentage of white female teachers increased. Contrary to the activity elsewhere in the country at the time, where the ranks of female teachers was growing, the number of teachers in Richmond dropped in

1870 by over 15%. There were very few non-white women in this occupation in 1870; only 7 of 4,378.

The only other category to expand after the war, besides Service/Unskilled Labor, was that of Lodging/Food/Entertainment Services which increased from 39 of 1658, or 2.3%, of the white female working population in 1860 to 72 of 871, or 8.3%, in 1870. This jump is directly related to the recording of Prostitutes on the 1870 census, something which was not done in 1860. Of the 175 prostitutes in 1870, 120 were non-white. Of the remaining 55, 52 were native-born and only 3 were immigrants. This is one occupation not included on the census list of "Selected Occupations," despite the fact that this study found it to be one of the most highly populated occupations, and therefore one reason the number of employed women discussed in this study exceeds the number in the census compilation (see Table 10, p. 51)

All three of the remaining job categories showed a decrease in the percentage of women participating in the occupations included therein. White female merchants were 7.6% (127 of 1658) of white working women in 1860. The war did much to destroy a number of businesses in Richmond. Therefore, a drop from 127 to 82 among white working women in 1870 is not surprising. However, the percentage of white female merchants among the total number of working white women increased from 7.7% to 9.5%. As might be expected, there was a higher percentage of white merchants than non-white. In 1860 there were only five non-white merchants on the census. By 1870, despite the huge increase of non-white women on the census rolls, the number of non-white merchants had only grown by eight to a total of 14 women.

Skilled Trades, which include seamstresses, dressmakers, tailoresses, and mantuamakers, was the second largest category of employed women in both 1860 and 1870 for white females. In 1860, 238 of 1,658 white women (19.8%) were in skilled trades. While their numbers had grown to 349 by 1870, there were only 871 employed white women on the census, so the percentage rose to 40.3%. Only 41 of 595 non-whites

who appeared on the 1860 census had a skilled trade; however, by 1870 their numbers had more than tripled to 152. But with 4378 non-white women employed, the actual percentage with a skilled trade dropped from 6.8% to 3.4%.

Factory employment was dominated by non-whites in both 1860 and 1870. There were 126 non-whites recorded in 1860, versus 219 in 1870, whereas white women numbered 11 in 1860 and only 18 by 1870. When looking at the figures for non-whites, however, it must be remembered that the 126 women in 1860 do not include slaves who were hired-out to factories by their masters, or slaves who were property of factory owners. Both of these circumstances were common in Richmond. Despite the burning of most factories during the war, Richmond had twice as many in 1870 as she had in 1860, but the number of women employed in factories did not follow suit. The actual number of female factory employees, both white and non-white, increased, although the category decreased in percentage between 1860 and 1870 for non-whites while increasing for whites. The percentage for non-whites declined from 21.2% to 5.0% and rose for whites from 0.06% to 2.1% (see Table 4, p. 29, Figure 2, p. 30, and Appendix A). While before the war a significant number of free non-white women worked in factories, the number of women slaves working as domestics was far greater. After the war, many of those who had been slave domestics pursued the same type of work once freed, thereby substantially increasing the percentage of non-whites in the Unskilled Labor category. The number of non-whites who could transfer experience in a factory while a slave to work when free was far smaller.

Wealth distribution broadened between 1860 and 1870. Values for 1860, for those working women who owned property, correspond fairly closely to the distribution of the races. The smallest ward (Ward 1) had the largest concentration of non-whites and the lowest real and personal estates values. Ward 2, the largest, did have the greatest average real estate value, but was only second in terms of personal estate. Although Ward 3 had 20% fewer people, its average real and personal estate values were almost equal to that of

the second ward. Similar statistics appear in 1870. There, the second largest ward by population (Madison), had the greatest amount of real and personal property. Jefferson ward, first in population, was second in terms of property. The property of the remaining wards corresponded to their size (see Table 11, p. 52 and Figure 7, p. 53). What is significant about 1870 is that non-white property holders increased their real and personal estate values by almost 100% since 1860, with mulattoes having slightly more property than blacks. (See Table 3, p. 16 and Figure 1, p. 17). There was a significant increase in the value of property held by non-whites and a similar decline in the value of property held by whites, the latter probably largely the result of the loss of the value of slaves owned prior to the war. The average value of property for white women declined by over 55% in the category of real property and 92% in personal property.

Among the employed women with property in 1860 white women held a much higher proportion of wealth than blacks. (See Table 3, p. 16 and Figure 1, p. 17). Mulattos were second and black women third. What is striking is that 112 of the 1658 (6.7%) white working women held 100% of the real estate owned by whites, and 15.5% held 100% of the personal property. For non-whites 27 of 595 (4.5%) owned 100% of non-white owned real estate and 9.1% owned 100% of the personal estate. In 1870 the breakdown of wealth by race was similar. What changed significantly was the percentage of women holding the property. Now, only 4.7% of the white working female population held 100% of the white-owned real estate, and 7.4% held 100% of the personal estate. Among non-whites the percentages were 9.3% of non-whites owned 100% of the non-white owned real estate, and 9.6% owned 100% of the personal estate, demonstrating small gains in property ownership from 1860 to 1870. Total wealth, or the sum of real and personal property values, can be used to show ethnic distribution of wealth.

In 1860, 211 native-born white women had a total worth of at least $100, versus 37 foreign-born white women. Among non-whites only 38 women had property worth $100 or more. Sixty-three women, all of whom were white, had over $10,000. (See Table 12

p. 54 and Figure 8, p. 55). Of the 281 white women included in the total worth calculations for 1860, 17% were foreign-born. By 1870 there was a dramatic shift in the ethnicity of women with property. In this year the majority of white women had only between $100 and $1000; only two had more than $10,000, and neither was native-born. There were only 80 white working women with property in 1870, but 41% were foreign born, a substantial increase in the wealth held by non-native-born residents. Although not provable, this change, too, could be linked to the war. Native-born Americans, especially Virginians, were devastated by the war financially. They lost a great deal of property, including slaves. Immigrants were much less likely to own real estate or slaves, and therefore perhaps were able to recover more quickly than people who actually had to rebuild. It could also be, however, that those who had not accumulated property account for those who left Richmond. Non-whites who owned property totaled only 34, actually a decrease from 1860, but as previously shown, the value of property owned by non-whites, who owned property, increased substantially.

These changes in racial and ethnic composition, literacy, and economic status can be attributed to the increase by over 100% of the working women in Richmond over a ten year period, most of them being non-white. The effect of the war on such a statistic cannot be overlooked. Nor can one overlook the changes in the types of occupations held by women, both white and non-white, before and after the war, or the differences in comparing non-white working women who appeared on the census of 1860 to those in 1870.

TABLE 6

TOTAL FEMALE POPULATION VS. TOTAL EMPLOYED FREE FEMALE POPULATION 1860 AND 1870

	TOTAL	EMPLOYED*
1860	17,736	2253
1870	27,401	5249

*Based on an actual count from the microfilmed census records of 1860 and 1870.

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Eighth Census of the United States for the City of Richmond, Virginia, 1860 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1864) microfilm.; U.S. Bureau of the Census, Ninth Census of the United States for the City of Richmond, Virginia, 1870 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1872) microfilm.

PERCENTAGE OF WORKING AGE WOMEN ACTUALLY WORKING IN RICHMOND IN 1870 - BY RACE

AGE	# of WORKING AGE WOMEN	PERCENT ACTUALLY WORKING[5]		
		BLACK	WHITE	MULATTO
10-15	428	95.5%	10.5%	9.3%
16-59	4,348	76.7%	18.4%	9.2%
60+	162	97.0%	14.8%	4.3%

[5]These numbers come from those compiled for this study, the total of which exceeds the number calculated by the census. This is attributed to the fact that some occupations were not considered in the official census numbers, e.g., prostitutes. Also not accounted for here are those minors under the age of 10 who were listed with occupations.

TABLE 7

POPULATION DISTRIBUTION OF EMPLOYED FREE FEMALES ACROSS WARDS BY RACE 1860[6]

	BLACK	WHITE	MULATTO
WARD 1	224 (60.8%)	275 (16.6%)	66 (29.1%)
WARD 2	88 (24.0%)	967 (58.3%)	33 (14.5%)
WARD 3	56 (15.2%)	416 (25.1%)	128 (56.4%)
	368	1658	227

POPULATION DISTRIBUTION OF EMPLOYED FEMALES ACROSS WARDS BY RACE 1870[7]

	BLACK	WHITE	MULATTO
CLAY	430 (11.0%)	137 (15.7%)	70 (15.6%)
JEFFERSON	1144 (29.1%)	323 (37.1%)	169 (37.8%)
MADISON	1248 (31.7%)	246 (28.2%)	100 (22.4%)
MARSHALL	273 (6.9 %)	45 (5.2%)	33 (7.4%)
MONROE	836 (21.3%)	120 (13.8%)	75 (16.8%)
	3931	871	447

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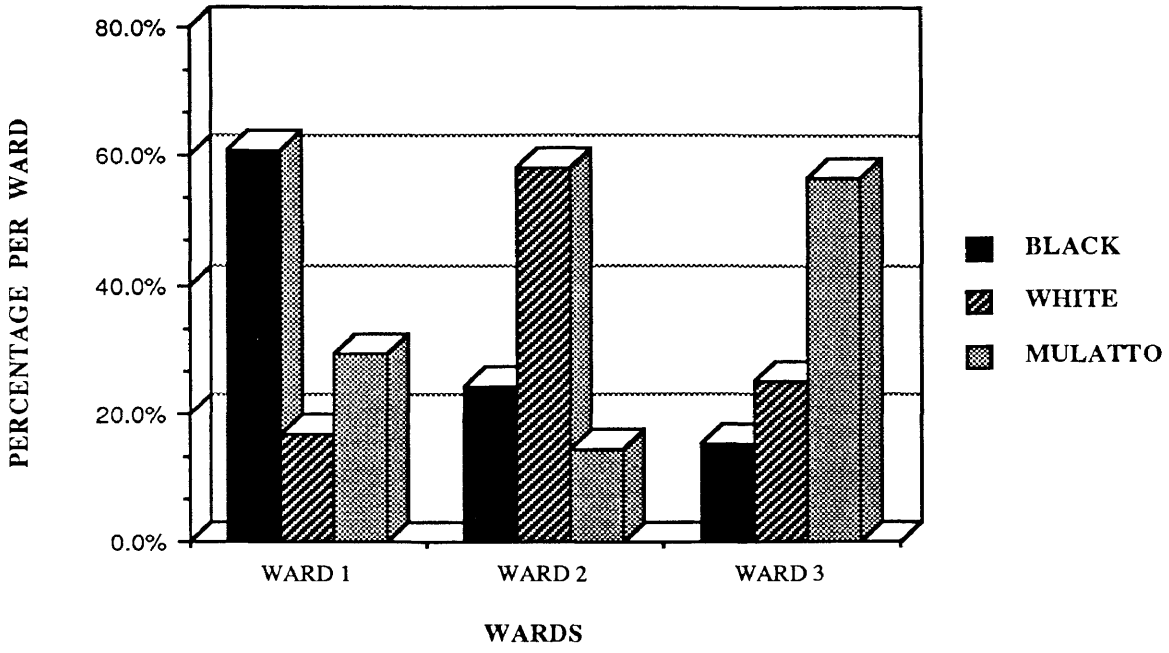
[6]Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Eighth Census of the United States for the City of Richmond, Virginia, 1860 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1864), microfilm.

[7]Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Ninth Census of the United States for the City of Richmond, Virginia, 1870 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1872), microfilm.

FIGURE 4

POPULATION DISTRIBUTION OF EMPLOYED FREE FEMALES ACROSS WARDS BY RACE - 1860



POPULATION DISTRIBUTION OF EMPLOYED FEMALES ACROSS WARDS BY RACE - 1870

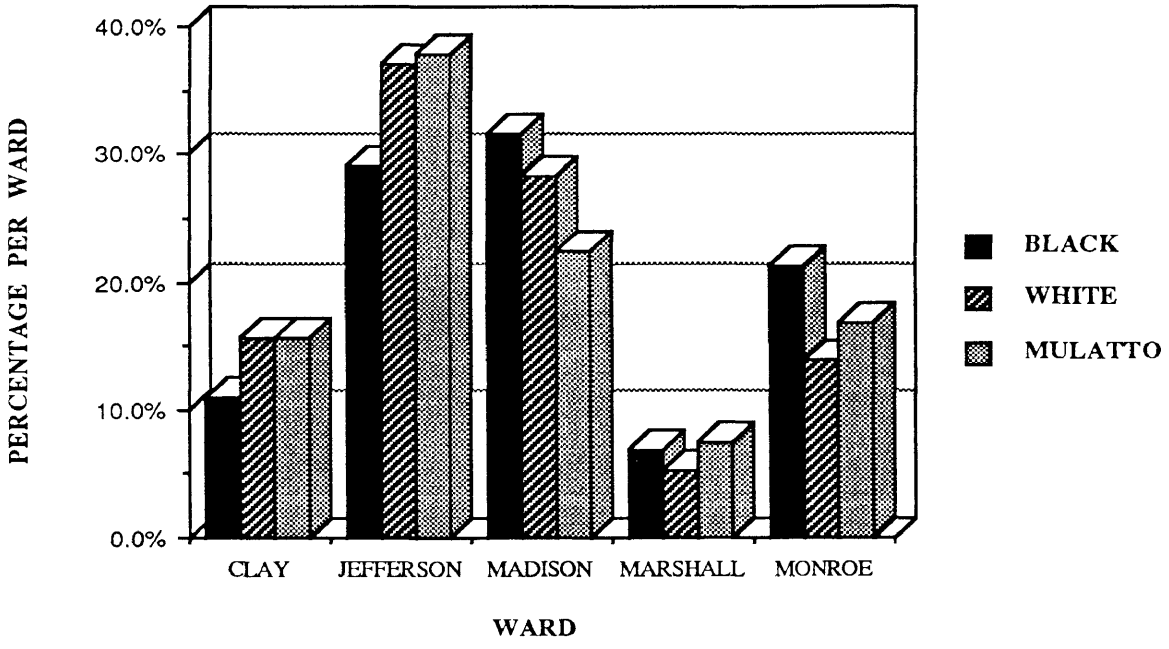


TABLE 8

WORKING FREE FEMALE POPULATION BY AGE AND RACE 1860

	BLACK	WHITE	MULATTO
3-14	26(7.0%)	24(1.4%)	13(5.7%)
15-25	117(31.8%)	586(35.3%)	65(28.6%)
26-35	96(26.1%)	438(26.4%)	64(28.2%)
36-45	72(19.6%)	308(18.6%)	52(22.9%)
46-55	40(10.9%)	173(10.4%)	20(8.8%)
56-65	11(3.0%)	85(5.1%)	10(4.4%)
66-75	5(1.3%)	34(2.1%)	3(1.4%)
76-85	1(0.03%)	9(0.6%)	0(0%)
	368	1657	227

There was one woman of unknown age.

WORKING FEMALE POPULATION BY AGE AND RACE 1870

	BLACK	WHITE	MULATTO
2-14	323(8.2%)	31(3.6%)	30(6.7%)
15-25	1751(44.6%)	389(44.7%)	246(55.0%)
26-35	795(20.2%)	194(22.2%)	85(19.0%)
36-45	564(14.4%)	147(16.9%)	53(11.9%)
46-55	311(7.9%)	74(8.5%)	21(4.7%)
56-65	133(3.4%)	27(3.1%)	11(2.5%)
66-75	43(1.1%)	8(0.9%)	1(2.3%)
76-85	8(0.2%)	1(0.1%)	0(0%)
	3928	871	447

There was one woman of unknown age.

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Eighth Census of the United States for the City of Richmond, Virginia, 1860 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1864) microfilm.; U.S. Bureau of the Census, Ninth Census of the United States for the City of Richmond, Virginia, 1870 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1872) microfilm.

FIGURE 5

WORKING FREE FEMALE POPULATION BY AGE AND RACE - 1860

WORKING FEMALE POPULATION BY AGE AND RACE - 1870

TABLE 9A

ILLITERACY RATES FOR EMPLOYED FREE WOMEN ACROSS WARDS AND BY RACE 1860[8]

	BLACK	WHITE	MULATTO
WARD 1	102(51.3%)	11(5.8%)	33(21.7%)
WARD 2	51(25.6%)	154(81.1%)	18(11.8%)
WARD 3	46(23.1%) 199	25(13.1%) 190	101(66.5%) 152

ILLITERACY RATES FOR EMPLOYED WOMEN ACROSS WARDS AND BY RACE 1870[9]

	BLACK	WHITE	MULATTO
CLAY	338(10.3%)	19(11.9%)	54(16.3%)
JEFFERSON	960(29.2%)	68(42.8%)	121(36.4%)
MADISON	1037(31.5%)	37(23.3%)	72(21.7%)
MARSHALL	216(6.6%)	9(5.7%)	22(6.6%)
MONROE	736(22.4%) 3287	26(16.3%) 159	63(19.0%) 332

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[8]This graph shows the illiteracy rate for the three wards in Richmond based on the 1860 census. Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Eighth Census of the United States for the City of Richmond, Virginia, 1860 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1864), microfilm.

[9]Note: The census of 1860 did not distinguish between inability to read and inability to write, so for the purpose of this graph, these separate figures for 1870 are combined. See the accompanying graph for the separate figures. Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Ninth Census of the United States for the City of Richmond, Virginia, 1870 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1872), microfilm.

TABLE 9B

EMPLOYED WOMEN UNABLE TO READ
1870

	BLACK	WHITE	MULATTO
CLAY	340(10.3%)	19(11.9%)	54(16.3%)
JEFFERSON	962(29.2%)	68(42.8%)	121(36.4%)
MADISON	1037(31.5%)	37(23.3%)	72(21.7%)
MARSHALL	216(6.7%)	9(5.7%)	22(6.6%)
MONROE	736(22.3%)	26(16.3%)	63(19.0%)
	3291	159	332

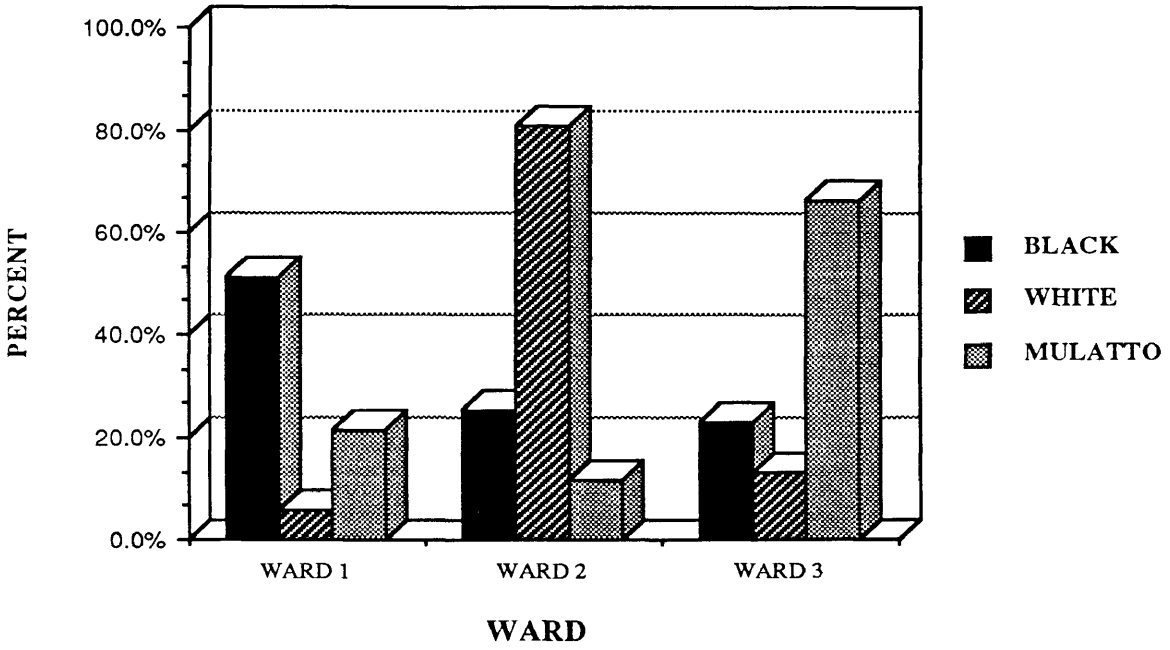
EMPLOYED WOMEN UNABLE TO WRITE
1870

	BLACK	WHITE	MULATTO
CLAY	381(10.9%)	32(16.0%)	61(16.4%)
JEFFERSON	1033(29.4%)	83(41.5%)	138(37.0%)
MADISON	1105(31.5%)	44(22.0%)	82(22.0%)
MARSHALL	246(7.0%)	15(7.5%)	28(7.5%)
MONROE	745(21.2%)	26(13.0%)	64(17.1%)
	3510	200	373

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Eighth Census for the United States for the City of Richmond, Virginia, 1860 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1864) microfilm.; U.S. Bureau of the Census, Ninth Census for the United States for the City of richmond, Virginia, 1870 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1872) microfilm.

FIGURE 6A

ILLITERACY RATES FOR EMPLOYED FREE WOMEN ACROSS WARDS AND BY RACE - 1860



ILLITERACY RATES FOR EMPLOYED WOMEN ACROSS WARDS AND BY RACE - 1870

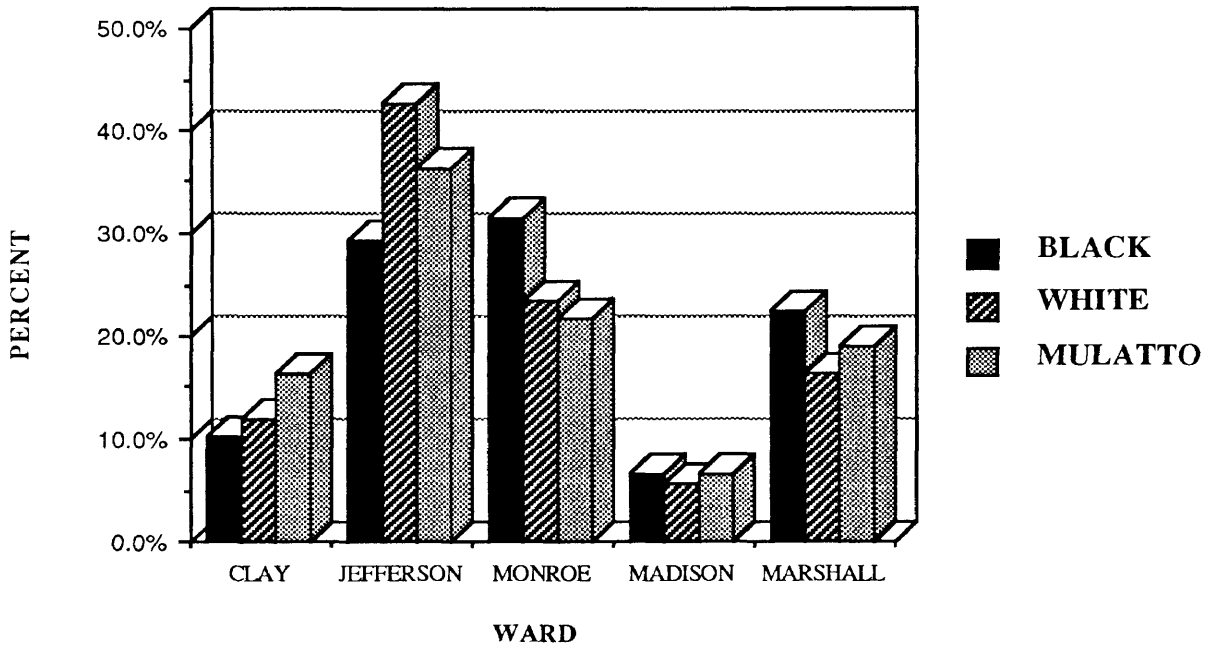
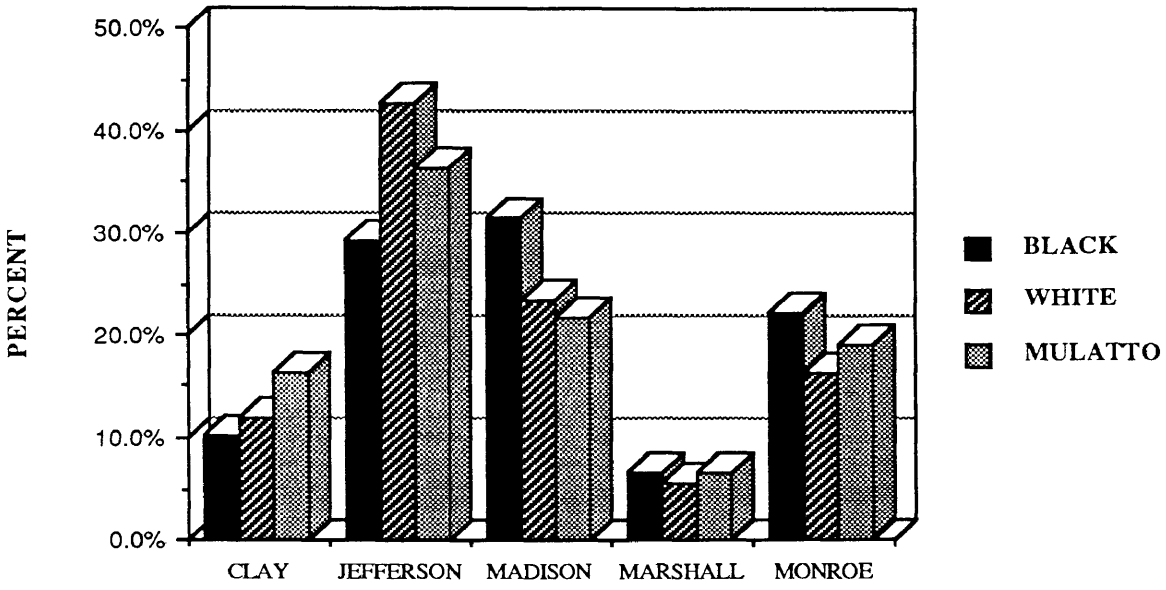


FIGURE 6B

EMPLOYED WOMEN UNABLE TO READ - 1870



EMPLOYED WOMEN UNABLE TO WRITE - 1870

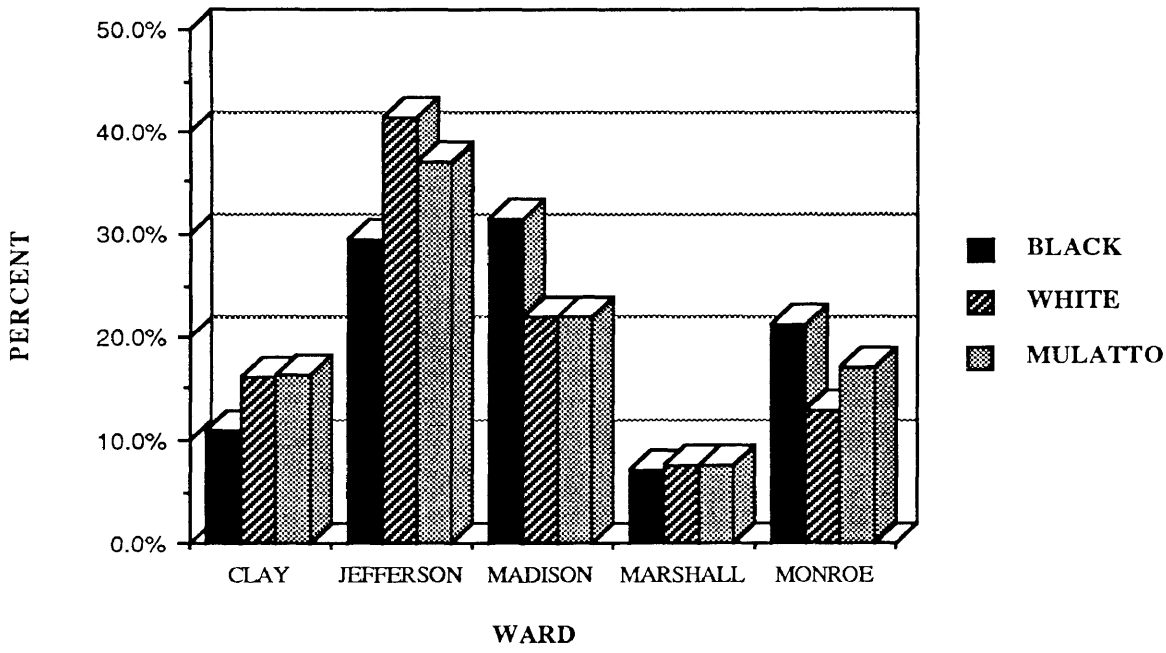


TABLE 10

EMPLOYED FEMALES IN RICHMOND BY AGE 1870

	3-9	10-15	16-59	60+	TOTAL
CENSUS DATA	----	428	4348	162	4938
THIS STUDY'S DATA	23	494	4542	188	5247*

*ONE WOMAN IN THIS STUDY HAD AN UNKNOWN AGE AND ONE WAS LESS THAN 3, FOR A TOTAL OF 5249 WOMEN.

Note: The 1860 census does not provide a breakdown of the female population of the City of Richmond by age, this information is provided only for Henrico County as a whole.

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Ninth Census of the United States for the City of Richmond, Virginia, 1870 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1872) microfilm.

TABLE 11

AVERAGE WORTH FOR FREE EMPLOYED WOMEN WITH PROPERTY (BY WARD) 1860

	REAL PROPERTY	PERSONAL PROPERTY
WARD 1	$2175	$366
WARD 2	$7860	$5855
WARD 3	$6598	$6125

AVERAGE WORTH FOR EMPLOYED WOMEN WITH PROPERTY (BY WARD) 1870

	REAL PROPERTY	PERSONAL PROPERTY
CLAY	$1295	$244
JEFFERSON	$4600	$330
MADISON	$5355	$506
MARSHALL	$1250	$350
MONROE	$2808	$310

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Eighth Census of the United States for the City of Richmond, Virginia, 1860 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1864) microfilm.; U. S. Bureau of the Census, Ninth Census of the United States for the City of Richmond, Virginia, 1870 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1872) microfilm.

FIGURE 7

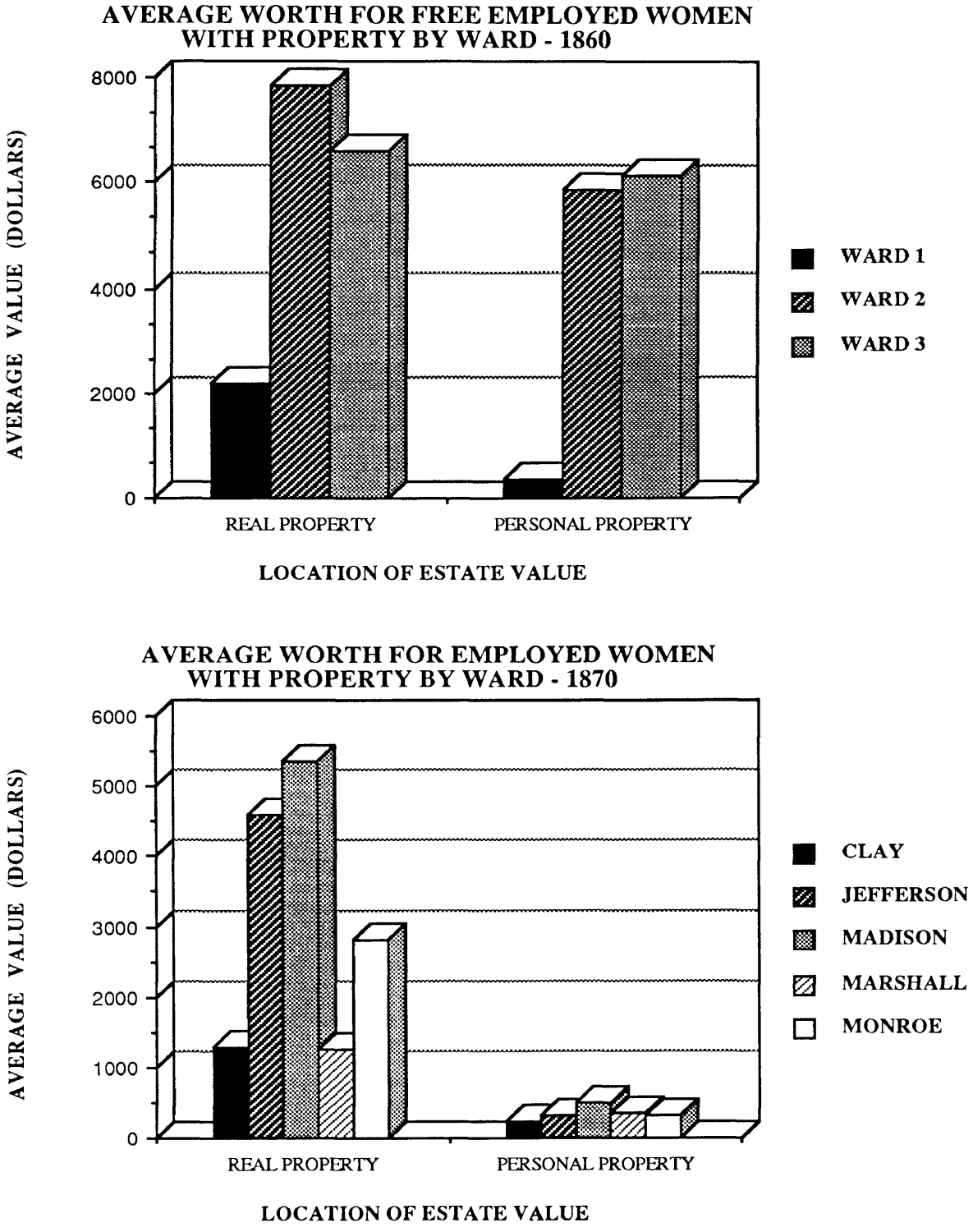

AVERAGE WORTH FOR FREE EMPLOYED WOMEN WITH PROPERTY BY WARD - 1860
AVERAGE VALUE (DOLLARS)
8000
6000
4000
2000
0
REAL PROPERTY
PERSONAL PROPERTY
LOCATION OF ESTATE VALUE
WARD 1
WARD 2
WARD 3
AVERAGE WORTH FOR EMPLOYED WOMEN WITH PROPERTY BY WARD - 1870
AVERAGE VALUE (DOLLARS)
6000
5000
4000
3000
2000
1000
0
REAL PROPERTY
PERSONAL PROPERTY
LOCATION OF ESTATE VALUE
CLAY
JEFFERSON
MADISON
MARSHALL
MONROE

TABLE 12

TOTAL WORTH COMPARISON OF NATIVE AND FOREIGN BORN FREE WOMEN WITH WEALTH FOR 1860 AND 1870

1860	**$1-99**	**$100-999**	**$1000-9999**	**$10000+**
Native				
Virginia				
White	22	46	87	56
Black	22	15	4	0
Mulatto	7	13	6	0
Rest of U.S.				
White	0	12	9	1
Black	0	0	0	0
Mulatto	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	**51**	**86**	**106**	**57**
Foreign				
White	11	21	10	6
Black	0	0	0	0
Mulatto	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	**11**	**21**	**10**	**6**
1870				
Native				
Virginia				
White	0	24	13	0
Black	1	17	5	0
Mulatto	0	8	3	0
Rest of U.S.				
White	0	6	3	1
Black	0	0	0	0
Mulatto	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	**1**	**55**	**24**	**1**
Foreign				
White	0	11	21	1
Black	0	0	0	0
Mulatto	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	**0**	**11**	**21**	**1**

Note: In 1860 there was one woman with property who had an unknown place of birth.

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Eighth Census of the United States for the City of Richmond, Virginia, 1860 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1864) microfilm.; U.S. Bureau of the Census, Ninth Census of the United States for the City of Richmond, Virginia, 1870 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1872) microfilm.

Conclusion

Antebellum Southern cities like Richmond had few working white women who were native-born. Before the war the free female working class in Richmond was composed primarily of white immigrants, free blacks, and mulattoes. The immigrants held most of the domestic jobs, while the non-whites were concentrated in factories (mainly tobacco). In addition, one must not overlook the female slaves who performed domestic services, for after the war they had considerable impact on the composition of the working female population in Richmond. With the huge increase of ex-slaves in the city, working women in 1870 were predominantly black, and blacks dominated domestic work. There were few immigrants, since most had fled to the North, and the native-born white women who worked were found in more skilled occupations than they had been prior to the war. This pattern has been found elsewhere in Southern cities. White women did not want to compete for jobs with women considered their social inferiors.

The majority of the wealth was held by native-born white working women before the war, though they constituted less than half of the female workforce. The wealth was spread among the political divisions of antebellum Richmond in a manner consistent with the racial distribution of the population; most of the money was in wards dominated by white women. Despite their domination in the post-war workforce, non-white women still held the least amount of wealth, although they had increased, on average, the value of their real and personal property, among those who owned property, while the average value of property owned by white women with property declined. Foreign-born women had a larger share of the upper economic strata than they had prior to the war. Presumably those who remained in Richmond were those who had become more prosperous.

Literacy among working women, white or non-white, did not improve after the war. In fact, the opposite occurred. The literacy rate decreased after the war, especially among non-whites because of the large number of ex-slaves included on the 1870 census.

This statistic is not unique to Richmond, since many freed slaves who were uneducated migrated to the cities. What is interesting is that mulattoes had a much higher literacy rate than did blacks, possibly because mulattoes were provided more opportunities for education than were blacks. One explanation for the decrease in literacy among white women may be that in the post-war years many women migrated from the rural areas, where education was less prevalent, to Richmond when they were unable to make a living on their farms.

It seems, then, that emancipation and the Civil War did have a significant impact on working women in the city of Richmond. While it did not alter greatly the occupations open to women, it did affect the types of women who performed the jobs which had been done prior to the war. The greatest changes were in the decrease in the number of immigrant women holding jobs in Richmond and in the percentage of native-born white women who listed an occupation. The huge increase in the number of non-white women performing domestic duties was, presumably, the result of the emancipation of slave women who had previously worked in that capacity. In the Service/Unskilled Labor category, for example, the dramatic increase in non-white domestic laborers could be linked to the fact that many female slaves performed domestic duties and were thus qualified to do the same after the war. This may also hold true for the category of Skilled Trades; as slaves women were taught to sew, which is the primary skill among the trades in this study, they were able to translate those skills into paid employment after the war.

The war resulted in many more non-white women, and many fewer white women, entering the free labor force, the literacy rate dropped dramatically, especially among non-whites, non-white women worked later in life than their white counterparts; and although they did not make great strides toward equality, non-white women did increase their personal wealth, while that of white women declined. Therefore, despite the fact that no direct comparisons can be made between white and non-white working women in 1860 and 1870, the war did affect the women working in Richmond in those years.

APPENDIX A

FEMALE OCUPATIONS IN 1860 AND 1870 BY CATEGORY

SERVICE/UNSKILLED LABOR	1860	1870
Domestic Servant	706	2688
(Nurse-considered Domestic Servant in 1870)*	-----	161
Washerwoman	301	763
Cook	14	291
Pantry Maid	0	2
House Servant	2	98
Dining Room Servant	0	1
Laborer	3	1
Day Labor	0	99
Farm Hand	0	3
Day Work	0	7
Servant/Serving	287	5
Body Servant	0	1
Steward for Masonic Lodge	1	0
Ladies Maid	1	0
Tavern Maid	1	0
Exchange Hotel Maid	2	0
Exchange Hotel Housekeeper	2	0
Hotel Chambermaid	8	17
Works in Hotel	0	1
Gentlewoman	120	0
Postmistress	0	1
Hardware Domestic	1	0
EDUCATION AND HEALTH SERVICES		
Teacher	82	70
Nurse	26	----
Physician	1	0
Ladies Nurse	1	0
Mid Wife	1	0
Instructor	1	0
Professor of Music	2	0
Music Teacher	1	2
French Teacher	2	0
Governess	2	1
Hospital Superintendent	2	0
Ladies Boarding School	1	0
Matron	1	2
LODGING AND FOOD & ENTERTAINMENT SERVICES		
Prostitute	0	175
Boardinghouse Keeper	36	10
Hotel Keeper	0	3
House Manager	0	1
Eating Saloon	1	0

*This distinction is made based on the fact that most of the nurses in 1870 were actually performing domestic duties, while those in 1860 were more likely to be actual health care providers. See Chapter 2 for further explanation.

Saloon Keeper	0	2
Bartender	0	1
Restaurant	1	0
Restaurant Keeper	0	2
Actress	1	0
Waiter/Waiter in Hotel	4	8
MERCHANT		
Dry Goods Merchant	2	2
Clerk	0	1
Retail Trade Store	0	1
Attending Store	0	1
Clerk in Store	0	2
Grocer	24	32
Small Grocer	0	1
Fruit Store	0	3
Confectioner/Confectionery	15	3
Works in Confectionery	0	1
Candy Store	0	1
Milliner	57	21
Apprentice to Milliner	1	0
Merchant	3	0
Crockery Store	0	1
Trimming Store	0	1
Dealer in Varieties	0	1
Saleslady	5	0
Works in Store	0	6
Store Room Keeper	0	1
Clothing Merchant	1	0
Clothing Dealer	1	0
Selling Old Clothes	0	1
Attendant in Cake Bakery	1	0
Works in Bakery	0	2
Manufacturer of Bread & Cakes	0	1
Clerk in Bakery Store	0	1
Huckster	2	4
Peddling	0	3
Shop Keeper	11	0
Clerk in Bookstore	0	1
Cook Shop	2	0
Bread Store	0	1
Rag Dealer	2	1
Selling Ice	0	1
Sells in Market	1	0
Snack House	1	0
Tobacconist	1	0
Stationer	1	0
SKILLED TRADES		
Seamstress/Dressmaker/Tailoress	350	466
Apprentice to Dressmaker	0	1
Fancy Dressmaker	0	1
Mantuamaker	8	8
Apprentice to Mantuamaker	0	1

Shoe Binder	2	0
Shoe Maker	1	0
Hatter	1	0
Hat Trimmer	1	0
Bonnet Maker	1	0
Wig Maker	1	0
Carder & Spinner of Wool	1	0
Regalia Maker	1	1
Painter	1	0
Sewing Machine Operator	1	0
Sewing	0	3
Sewing Out	0	1
Plain Sewing	0	15
Embroidery/Embroiderer	0	3
Hoop Skirt Maker	0	1
FACTORY		
Tobacco Factory	58	228
Makes Tobacco Bags	0	1
Stamps Tobacco in Factory	0	1
Manager Tobacco Factory	1	0
Cotton Factory	4	4
Woolen Factory	1	0
Factory Hand	72	0
Box Binding	1	0
Paper Box Maker	0	1
Paper Factory	0	1
Folding Books	0	1
TOTAL	**2253**	**5249**

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